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THE HARMONY OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

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THE HARMONY

OF

THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

BY

HERMAN J. HEUSER

OVERBROOK SEMINARY

"*Laudate Eum in chordis et organo.*"—Ps. 150

SECOND EDITION.

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The Harmony of the Religious Life

Prelude.

Lamartine, the poet, who had an intense as well as instinctive appreciation of the harmonies of nature, relates in one of his *Mémoires*, how, when a child, he was in the habit of making little instruments of music upon which heavenly spirits played sweet harmonies. He would take a slender bit of willow branch and tie it in the fashion of a bow or harp, across which he stretched a number of threads taken from the blonde tresses of his young sister's head.

Then exposing the tiny instrument to the air, so that the gentle breathings of the summer wind could sweep the delicate strings, his childish ear would listen to the response, and fancy or discern the soft sounds of music far away, as though it came from a chorus of angelic spirits. One day, writes the author of the *Méditations Poétiques*, it occurred to us children thus engaged in play to find out whether the angels played the same tunes upon harps whose chords were of different fiber from that of my sister's hair. We had an aunt, of very gentle disposition, who lived with us and watched our childish sports whilst sitting in the garden engaged with her embroidery. Her hair was of a silver white, blanched early during the

harrowing scenes of the Reign of Terror which she had witnessed. We asked her to cut off one of her tresses that we might make other harps and find out what melodies the angels played on them. With a sweet smile she complied—and singularly enough, whether it was due to the difference of tension in stretching the threads of hair across the frame, as these were more or less elastic in their nature, or whether it was that the currents of wind passing over the two harps were in one case more gentle than in the other—at all events, we found that the celestial spirits sounded a melancholy and yet more sweetly harmonious air upon the silver-stringed harp than upon the bright blonde strands of my sister's hair. And from that day on we often

importuned our gentle aunt to let our hands despoil her beautiful brow, that we might hear the melodious voices of the angels that sang for her in the spheres.

It was a pretty touch of ingenuity which made the childish hearts discover not only the hidden harmonies of God's invisible creation, but led them to trace the differences in the expressions of youth and age. The fact suggests the inference that, if we look thoughtfully enough into the world that lies around us, we shall there find distinct echoes of the heavenly voices, not merely to awaken pleasure, but to teach deep lessons of truth.

I have often looked upon the rows of religious at prayer or at instruction in their stalls, devoutly thoughtful, and

sometimes with that sight arose the image of a grand instrument of music—a harp, or better, an organ—uttering sweet harmony through the silent spheres, caught up by angelic choirs in heaven and sending back its charming echoes to the whole communion of saints on earth.

And so in truth it is. A religious community, if it be as God designed it, resembles a grand instrument of music, a harp of which the individual members are the strings, or an organ of which they represent the separate keys which are touched by the Divine Hand, to give forth sweet harmony of a heavenly music, according to the will of God, who is the master artist controlling the instrument. The melodious chords of His play vary as He ex-

presses His pleasure, caressing the grateful and docile soul, or manifesting His glory, or sweetly attracting with loving invitation the wayward heart in danger of straying. Let those of my readers who have chosen to be members of a religious institute which He has fashioned into an instrument whose melodies might soothe and attract souls unto Himself, enter briefly into this view of the religious life.

The Grand Organ.

We are all familiar with the organ used in the divine service. There is a keyboard. A long row of ivory and ebony pieces, white and black, arranged side by side in perfect order; and

though all the keys look alike, when touched by the hand of the Master each sounds forth a separate note; they all differ in name, in power, in natural sweetness, or resonance.

The perfection of the instrument depends on *three* things, and requires that:

(1) each key sound its note clear, distinct, and pure;

(2) each key respond promptly to the touch of the player;

(3) each note, while absolutely keeping its distinct sound, combine its own action with that of other notes in such a way as to produce harmony.

And this likeness indicates the perfection of the religious community which is the living instrument under the hand of our Divine Master. The

religious take their places side by side, as the keys, black and white—symbolic of both purity and soberness—in perfect order. There appears hardly any distinction in the closely serried ranks of community life. And yet there is, as in the notes of the organ, a distinctness which calls for different names, an individuality of gifts of mind and body which calls for a difference of service. Some of the keys are in constant use—those midway in life; others are rarely touched—those at the end of life. Yet all are needed to complete the board.

As the perfection of this grand instrument, the organ, depends on

purity of sound;

prompt action of each key; and

a ready combination of different keys to produce one harmonious chord—so

the perfection of the religious community depends on

purity of intention and action;

prompt obedience;

readiness to combine with others so as to promote harmony of the religious spirit.

The Keyboard.

The touch of a key must call forth a sound pure and clear, promptly responsive, in harmony with the notes sounded simultaneously. Thus the concord of religious life depends on purity of intention and action, on prompt obedience, on charity's fair tolerance with others as with ourselves.

The things which hinder purity of intention are the things which foster self-deceit in us. It may be, too, that

the gravity of our downward-tending human nature drags us now and then in the dust, so as to stain our acts with the mire of earthly motives and affections; but then we find ever our corrective in obedience, especially when the wise toleration of our superiors and monitors makes us see our fault before exacting the penalty of submission. What else is the religious *Rule* but the mechanism that enables the breath of heaven to enter the pipes of this grand organ, that through them might be conveyed to others the sweet melodies which the Sacred Heart of our Royal Master inspires? And if this be so, is it not also necessary that the little hammers which are part of this mechanism should at intervals beat down upon our sensitiveness, or that we

should feel the restraining force of the strings, holding the levers which physically control the inspired action?

But as the service of a true religious is the service of love, it must not wholly rest upon obedience. The harmony produced by this instrument must be, like the keys of a good instrument, *spontaneous*, *ready*, *generous*, characterized by that fruitful ingenuity of loving hearts which knows how to put others at their ease, which never thinks of self or weighs the cost of a sacrifice, when it is clear that charity is kindled thereby.

Intervals.

And yet here we may learn from the laws of harmony to be cautious. It is true that charity is the only living virtue

to which we may abandon ourselves without misgivings; it overtops all other virtues, even as the mercy of God is above His justice. Nevertheless, charity is perfect only when it is regulated. Harmony in music may be defined as an agreement of sounds produced at proper distances from each other. The proper distance is important. Too close approximation, destroying the intervals, at once destroys harmony. The notes struck by the keys pair in thirds or fifths or octaves, and thus produce a concord of sweet sounds; only rarely can two notes quite close together help the transition from sound to sound in harmony. So it is with the friendship of religious life. Respect, not familiarity, preserves it.

Harmony demands likewise that we

yield readily in point of time. A key tenacious of its hold, swelled out by the dampness of the atmosphere, will keep on sounding a note after the player has released it; and even though the note itself be good and clear, it will nevertheless destroy the harmony of sounds by its untimely insistence. So punctuality, and the law which ordains for everything the proper time, are an integral constituent of good order and harmony in religion.

Flats and Sharps.

In the religious life there must be no flats or sharps. Flats and sharps are good only when we deal with worldlings,—and that ought to be rarely. On such occasions plenty of accidentals are needed, either to bring back the

right tone or to prepare a transition to a clearer chord. But in our instrument provision is made for perfect chords, and in the society of our own members we hardly need sharps and flats—least of all, flats; these ought to be forbidden by every religious *Rule*. One of the most saintly founders of religious institutes in modern times used to impress it upon the members of her community that, "The first rule of the house is not to bore anybody." She wanted joy which, if it proceed from a virtuous heart, is always intelligent, though it may not always be prudent. "It is enough," she said, "that we are stupid by nature; it is quite superfluous to endeavor to be stupid also by grace." Sometimes a certain ready intelligence is accounted wisdom with religious;

it often looks like prudence, and yet even with regard to this cardinal virtue we need to be cautious, unless we are quite sure that it has its basis deep down in charity. Without charity prudence becomes simply animal shrewdness and makes us suspicious and critical. If there be one thing that is clear regarding the requisite disposition for entering the Kingdom of our Master, it is that we be like little children. Now, little children, though very easily hurt because they are sensitive, do not as a rule foster resentment; they forgive quickly; they have no suspicions; they are not punctilious, they are, above all, generous and simple-minded; and last of all, they have a singular faculty for spreading joy. When we have suffi-

ciently practised the simplicity and big-hearted disposition of little children, so that nothing can wound our sensitiveness, leaving the feeling of malice and ill-will; when we have learnt to be proof against taking scandal, and have developed the child's talent of creating and spreading joy, then we may safely abandon ourselves to that prudent instinct which is the gift of the Holy Ghost and comes to those who seek only God.

It is true a religious is taught to discriminate in the matter of giving pleasure to others, even of laboring for others. The secular motto, "Mind your own business," is an excellent device for keeping on the straight path of the spiritual life. Furthermore, the religious *Rule* tells us very clearly that

our personal sanctification is the first object for which we enter religious life with its counsels of perfection; and that next to this only comes the service of others in pursuit of the special aims of the institute to which we may belong. Yet this is but a seeming distinction, in so far as the means to any end is ever subservient to that end, whilst the end itself is attained only by the means. Thus, if we accomplish the primary aim of our vocation by the means assigned, we shall, in saving our souls, have benefited our neighbor and fulfilled the principal object of our religious institute. Hence, a zealous fulfilment of our work as instructors of the ignorant, comforters of the afflicted, helpers of the poor, in the spirit of our

Order, means direct sanctification, and is, therefore, in the first instance, of actual and practical importance.

Pedals.

I have said that as the perfection of a musical instrument under the hand of a skilful master depends on the three facts of purity of sound, prompt response to the touch of the artist, and harmonious agreement with the other notes of the register, so the perfection of a religious community depends on purity of intention and action, on prompt obedience, and on readiness to promote the harmony of a religious house. But there remains something else that gives a royal undertone, a certain mellowness

and richness, to the sounds of a grand instrument. It is the pedal work, deep down, unseen, but sustaining the notes above. That pedal work corresponds in the religious life to the spirit of sacrifice. It is nothing distinct from the virtue of charity, or zeal, or self-denial, and yet it is that which, like the grand undertones of the lower pedals of an organ, lends a royal richness to its harmonious action.

Harmony in the religious life essentially demands the spirit of *self-sacrifice*. It has been remarked that, while the Church calls her virgin daughters *brides*, the religious *Rule* of nearly every institute, cherishing indeed the title of *Sponsa Christi* as an honor and a privilege, assumes, nevertheless,

that its daughters in the pursuit of their work of charity fulfil the task of *mothers*. And where the religious *Rule* does not give those who have made their probation this title, it belongs to them at least in the eyes of those for whom they labor—the little ones and the poor of Christ. That title of "mother" means a task of *sacrifice;* and it is a mother's peculiar privilege that all her sorrows and hardships may become the basis of joys for others, even in the natural order. The task of religious charity is the task of a mother's care that does not count any pain short of that pain which comes from the denial of Christ.

Do we realize what that means? Under the Emperor Licinius there

was in Armenia a band of men, valiant soldiers, bound together like religious by a vow to serve Christ in harmonious fulfilment of His holy law. They chanted their Christian hymns, as was the custom, morning and night; and their union made them so strong and formidable in battle that they were enlisted under the so-called thundering legion—"terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata." One day Lysias, their General, was ordered to appear with his men at a solemn service of the pagan rite. Forty of the legion, all distinguished, despite their youth, for valiant service, advanced to the General and with modest manliness refused to enter the temple. They were detailed to appear before the judge, Agricola, who

asked their names. One after the other they answered: "*Christianus sum*" —"I am a Christian." They wished thus to emphasize the fact that, whatever their original country and family relations, they were the sons of one Father, whose kingdom they knew it would be their lot soon to enter united by the bonds of common martyrdom as of their common faith. The story of their awful sufferings and death is well known. Their united chant, as they lay tortured and bleeding on the icy plain of Armenia, was, we are told, the CXX Psalm, *Levavi oculos meos in te Domine, qui habitas in coelis.* Gradually, as the morning advanced, the song died from the lips of the dying soldiers, until but one was left feebly pouring out

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his noble longing for the eternal stars above. He was very young, but strong and valiant and beautiful in the God-given pride that belongs to early life. He had survived the tortures of days; and now, when the guards came to break his limbs, that he might quickly die, he ceased to sing. At that moment a woman, his mother, who had been watching all through the night in prayer near by, broke past the guards toward the youth still writhing in his blood, and lifting his head gently to her bosom, whispered into his ear: "O hold out, my son! for behold thy Master awaits thee at the gate!" And then, seeing that the wagon which was to carry away the dead bodies of the martyrs to the burial pit had

moved on, she lifted the sweet burden of her son upon her aged shoulders and followed the train, lest he might be separated even in death from his brothers in the faith.

Such, in sooth, is every true *Christian mother's* faith and love toward the child whom God has entrusted to her care. It must be our way, too!

Would we know what such faith and love can effect in the heart of a child trained by Christian affection and in the spirit of sacrifice? We find the answer in those same Martyr Acts to which I have referred just now. On the 24th of October they relate the death of more than three hundred Christians at one execution under the Emperor Justin. The account ends thus: Lastly they brought

a Christian woman to be burnt alive at the stake. A little boy, five years of age, ran by her side. Whilst fire was being set to the pile upon which the mother had been bound, her little son was kept at a short distance. It would increase the torture of the mother and also of the child, whose cries rang above the noise of the tumultuous crowd, rending the air and the generous mother's heart. But she kept calling to her little one: "My child, love only the good Christ, and He will bring thee to thy mother." And the infant voice, trained to obey in holy love, repeated the words: "I love only the good Christ, who will bring me to my mother." Then suddenly he freed himself from the hand of the soldier who weakly restrained

him, and ran up to the burning pile that he might go with her who had taught him to love Christ, even through flames, which could not weaken her own love.

Are we capable of teaching such faith to the children whom God entrusts to our care with equal—nay, superior—means at our command? I do not hesitate to answer: Yes, assuredly, provided we ourselves possess the spirit of self-sacrifice that goes with Christian faith and charity, as it is interpreted by our holy vocation and the example as well as the teaching of our institute. In the annals of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart we read how on the feast of St. Mary Magdalen, just sixty years ago, P. Varin asked the novices in the Paris

convent whether they were prepared then and there, or in the next few days, to die on the scaffold which the revolutionists in their hatred of religion had erected in the streets of the city. They did not reflect very long. "Yes; only shall we have time to make our vows before it?" They were but novices, yet they would be glad to seal with their blood the compact made with Christ, if only it were ratified by the Institute of the Sacred Heart to which they had pledged their fidelity. Are not all our religious men and women trained to this valor by the same spirit of self-sacrifice that characterizes the conventual institutes wherein are made the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience? If those young Parisian

novices in 1830 found in their institute the strength that filled their hearts with the blood of martyrs, why should it fail those who profess to follow the same lofty standard of religious self-denial? Hence we see of what supreme value it is that we make this daily life a true symphony that is capable of inspiring courage to do great things in little ways for our Divine Master. Courage is a contagious virtue, albeit it is a silent growth in a religious house; and in the peace and harmony that breathe through the halls of a convent it is not difficult to cherish the embers of a sacred fire, a love, meek and humble, but capable of bursting into flames that consume sin and ingratitude, and convert into new forms the darkened

gold of weak and sin-stained souls. Is it not the privilege of the religious to fan the flame of a zealous love, catching it, as it were, from the Divine Heart of Him who came to cast it among men, wishing that it be kindled?

An Intonation.

And now let me sum up what has been thus far said: A community of religious men or women is an instrument devised and constructed by God, and in the hands of our divine Lord, who sits upon His chaste throne, to control the keys of our hearts. It is He who has placed us in the exact position in which we are; and it is essential to the fulfilment of His designs that we should be just where and what we are.

That design is, as I have said, twofold. First, to fill the heavens and the earth with His glory (by *our* activity freely given to His service from motives, not of necessity, as is the case with irrational creatures, but of love and devotion). Secondly, to win to His service and to a participation in His glory those who sit in the valley of sadness and the shadow of death, by communicating to them the sweet and skilful strains of His music, allowing Him to enter the deep recesses of their souls, and thus to attract them to His presence and to the enjoyment and refining operation of His heavenly charms.

We are the medium through which this twofold purpose can be and is to be accomplished. Alas! that we

should have it in our power, not only not to correspond to this magnanimous design, but even to frustrate it! For, note it well, a single key, from end to end of that long row, which fails to yield and answer clearly and readily to the touch of His Sacred Hand not only remains mute, but jars, confuses and destroys the concord of sweet sounds. And if by our weakness we cut off the harmony destined for heaven; if by our failure to respond clearly and promptly to the call of our great Master at the organ of His chosen institute we silence His invitation, it would be a great injury to God's cause.

Yet even this, deeply humiliating as it is, He might forgive, as He

has done a thousand times, being mindful of our weak ways. But it is hard to say what He could do, even in the full length of His gentle forbearing, in order that He might restore and set right the losses *of* and *to* souls which by our resistance or indifference we have failed to draw to Him. Is it not our daily task to transmit and communicate the inspirations that issue from His Sacred Heart, by the sweet modes of our charity, unto the needy souls committed to our keeping? Are we of any value if we have lost the power or the will or the generous eagerness to catch the sublime strains arousing motives in the hearts of others, for the search after and the love of God? They say that a single word, vibrating

through the air, sets in motion untold currents that eventually effect the movement of whole worlds in their courses through space. It is reasonable on physical grounds. Is it unreasonable to assume that He, who made all things physical but the images of some spiritual power or truth, will hold us some day accountable for the jangle and dissonance caused in the world and the movement of souls by sullen failure to answer His beating of time from the sacred chair where He sits day and night awaiting our correspondence?

But whilst it is an appalling consciousness to have refused the little sacrifices which, caught up by His love, would swell the harmonious sounds pouring out from His Sacred

Heart, it is a great joy to know that we have helped on the conquest of souls! We are small, very small; and yet the dignity of being an essential part of this majestic movement of sounds filling the heavens of our God with their thrilling strains, making Paradise in the souls of men and lifting them up into the choirs that throng round the throne of Heaven—is there anything like to it in the honors of the world? *Dextera Domini fecit me.*

If the worldling deems it wise, for the gaining of a blazing brief renown, to touch his facile lyre to please the ear and win the buzzing plaudits of the crowd, shall we in timid love of self withhold the chant that carols loud and clear up to the stars and

finds its echo in the waiting, longing hearts of men?

Whenever we hear the strains of the organ in chapel, and join our voices in concordant praises of the Divine Spouse, which are but a prelude to those celestial chants of gratitude which we are destined to repeat in the heavenly Jerusalem, it ought to suggest the thought that our music is but an image and a monitor, a symbol, if you like, of what as a body we are ourselves; namely, a living instrument of gratitude and helpfulness to others, under the skilful hand of the great Virtuoso who sends forth the inspirations of His Sacred Heart through us. And can we reasonably have any lesser aim than that of making this harmony perfect by

yielding to His modulating touch, *living* as well as chanting the noble symphony, our matin song and vesper hymn:

Cantate Domino canticum novum—

a new song, fresh and clear and without a flaw, a

Jubilate Deo in cithara et voce psalmi, in organis benesonantibus—

a virgin song unto the honor of His Holy Name, and to the joy of His children on earth?

Tuning the Organ.

The purpose of our reflection thus far has been to deepen the conviction that those who have made the profession of Religious Life are specially chosen instruments in God's hands, destined to correspond to His affec-

tionate designs of securing—apart from His own glory—the happiness of His creatures.

For the better understanding of our position, we compared the religious community to a magnificent organ in which the separate parts combine in such a way as to produce that heavenly harmony which at once declares God's glory and draws souls unto Him by the sweet attractions of His native melodies.

We saw how each note, represented by the ivory and ebony pieces of the key-board, although differing from the rest in name, in power, in natural timbre and resonance, does yet contribute its essential part in effecting that unity of variety which, according to the Angel of the Schools, con-

stitutes true beauty. And we endeavored to understand how the perfection of this harmony, which the grand organ of the Religious Life aims to attain, is dependent on three things—(1) the clearness and purity of the individual note; (2) the promptness with which each key answers to the touch of the Divine Artist; (3) the aptitude of the several notes to combine at proper intervals.

But the grand organ is not yet located in Paradise, albeit our Lord has given orders to transport it thither in good time. For the present it is still on earth; and hence it is quite natural that the dust of earth should get into the reeds and pipes, or that the damp atmosphere should swell the keys and hamper the normal

action of an otherwise perfect instrument. Moreover, it is not only the dust or damp that deranges the organ; but it sometimes happens that a naughty child of earth usurps the place of the Divine Organist, and with unskilled hand thumbs upon and pounds the keys so that the pipes become inflated, and the reeds distended, or the delicate joints holding the hammers get loosened and occasionally break.

And what is the remedy for all this?

Monthly Tuning.

The Rule says we are to *tune once a month;* that is, when we make our Monthly Retreat. Besides, there is one grand annual tuning, after the instrument had been locked up during

the time when we took our summer vacation.

It may be that when tuning day arrives, there is nothing to tune, still there are always some great festivals ahead for which we must examine. Thus Advent and Lent are practising times for the Christmas and Easter chants. We must be sure that everything is right for these occasions, in order that our dearest Lord may be pleased on His feast days, and make grand music out of our hearts, to unite us in one harmonious chorus for the angelic *Gloria in excelsis* and the *Alleluia* of gratitude, amid the joys of the Nativity and the Resurrection.

It may be necessary to examine the keys in order to find out *whether*

every key moves easily up and down. If they do, then all else is likely to be right, since the instrument had a grand tuning in the autumn, when St. Ignatius or some kindred master tried his Exercises on it. So it should not take long to restore the flow of harmony in a religious house that lives up to the general order prescribed by its Rule. But we must be patient all the same; and when we hear a wrong note or some other defect, it will not do to say: "That is her weakness exactly!" but say: "That is myself"—or at least: "If I don't look out, that may be myself to-morrow."

We begin the tuning: C—D—E—. But it is important that we do not forget the black keys! They

are half a tone *higher* than the rest. The religious who wear the black veil are supposed to be higher in knowledge—and, therefore, in intelligent virtue (that is, if they are in good condition); or, they are a half tone lower, when they are behind the white keys. This is a thing we have to study out carefully.

E—F—#F—G—#G—all right. *A*—A—A. There is something wrong. The key won't go *down* easily, though it yields to pressure.

A is an important key; it really stands for *H*, coming immediately after *G*, and may therefore mean *Humility*, which virtue is close upon generosity, goodness, grace. But being such an important note, it is rightly called *A*. There is one black

key after *A*, which means that in the matter of humility the only distinction between novice and professed is this, that the professed must reach a higher degree than the novices. After that nothing further remains; we have reached the perfection of our state and are ready for heaven. Our Lord distinctly made that the beginning and end of His lesson, "Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of Heart." (Matt. ii. 29.)

H (humility), with its concord, *meekness*, is the first virtue that we have to spell out of the story of life as revealed to us by the *Sacred Heart*.

But if this *A* won't go down, it can not be quite *humility;* for humility goes down ever so easily. If, therefore, the *A* stands up, sticks up, is

"uppish," why then it is *pride*. And if our Lord takes His finger (which is the Rule and the voice of our Superiors), and, pressing upon the key, discovers a sulky resistance, it means that our pride has assumed the form of *disobedience*.

As a matter of fact, the two defects of pride and disobedience are very closely connected, just as are the contrary virtues of *humility* and *obedience*. And it is well to remember this, if we are at all anxious about discovering our *dominant passion*. Bishop Hedley, who writes very beautifully on this subject in one of his later books, believes that all our influence in education or in any sphere of action depends upon the right understanding of this com-

bination. "Most of us," he says, "have a line of work or influence; now we shall never work on sound principles until we understand that the humility and obedience of Jesus are the most mighty forces that exist; and, what is more, that they are the only forces, practically speaking, that count."[1]

Let us, then, get some further light on the subject—even if the glare cause our eyes to smart a little—of pride, of *our* pride; for it is of grave importance to recognize that the pride of the religious is not of the common, vulgar sort which one finds in the world. The habit of haughty disdain or of insolent self-assertion, or the quiet exaltation which

[1] Hedley, *Retreats*, p. 137.

places a high price upon its own utterances and movements, as if to say: "Look how magnificent!"—these manifestations of conceit do not commonly make their way into a religious house. A religious house where such arrant exhibitions of pride are possible is simply a boarding-house, and one not of a very respectable sort. But pride is a wonderfully accommodating element. It thrives in almost any atmosphere—except in that of simplicity; it goes with all the other virtues as naturally as a *shadow goes with its object*. Indeed, it might be called the shadow of virtue, lost for a time when the sky is dull, but sure to come back, ever varying its size with the movement of the sun. And if it can be very small,

it can be very subtle as well; indeed it must be so, for how else could it have gotten into heaven to decoy Lucifer from his throne? No wonder, then, that it should sometimes get into our organ, and make the keys swell out, so that they fail to move with easy grace as directed by the touch of divine admonition.

This swelling out in the spiritual order manifests itself among good people like religious, according to spiritual writers of the older school, and some, like Father Faber, of the modern school, by *self-complacency*, by *forming a good opinion of ourselves*, by *criticising others*, by *ridiculing*, by an *aversion to be criticised*, by a notable *attachment to our ideas*, by *obstinacy of will*. But let us go slowly.

Self-complacency and a good opinion of ourselves look very much alike. They are akin, only one has a grain of vanity in it which dilutes its strength; the other is a growth of pride pure and simple, and is therefore harder to correct.

If, perchance, with God's tools and His encouraging grace we have done anything proximately well, forthwith there is the inclination to get into a sort of mental rocking-chair and go over it all, very deliberately. It looks like self-examination. We are beginning to contemplate ourselves at a fair distance, to pat ourselves on the back, to speculate as to what effect it must have had upon others; and then we rise with a buoyant start, take one more look into our

pretty spiritual looking-glass, and give vent to a sort of pious fervor by the ejaculation: "Well, you have done at least *something*;" which means that we give ourselves due credit for the humility with which we *neglected* to do something *before*, and is also a sort of running commentary on how little other people do. Possibly we go out, and half unconsciously tempt those who may have witnessed our heroism, and on whose good nature we can rely, to say something complimentary to us, or to talk about it anyhow. If they praise us generously (which is mostly an indication of the *goodness of the giver* and *not of that of the receiver*), we drink it in with a nervous fear to interrupt the stream. If the praise be timidly

given us, because the giver has respect for our supposed good sense, then we gently protest, or just admit part of our magnificent motives, and how much better we could have done under other circumstances more favorable to the growth and nature of our virtues. Thus, we go on raising our pedestal, as if we have never made any resolutions to seek God's glory first and annihilate self-love in all our undertakings.

Nor is it only that we nourish our pride by a self-complacent review of the things which have actually been well done. We go a turn further. If we have no merits, we imagine them. In truth, it is wonderful how well we can build with nothing, when

it comes to rearing a monument to our presumable deserts.

When in this complacent, constructing mood, we are ready to apply to ourselves any casual praise flowing from passages about the saints which we find in spiritual reading books; if persons be kind to us, we imagine that it must be because they have noticed some special merit in us; if they be unkind, then they must be jealous for the same reason. Even at our examinations of conscience we glide instinctively from our omissions to the things in which we succeed. Instead of saying: "I broke my morning resolution ten times," we say: "Well, I kept it anyhow three times." In this way we destroy the very virtue which we

imagine ourselves to be in the act of cultivating. We are like children who have planted a pretty flower, and then go to pull it up every half hour to see if it has grown.

More dangerous than the habit of *self-complacency* is the disposition which leads us to form a normally good opinion of ourselves. When in this state we make not only much of our good actions, but we persist in claiming a sort of impeccability which authorizes us to excuse, palliate, or explain away whatever is faulty and reprehensible in our conduct. We are in a rather bad condition when we imagine that we are about as good as the average religious. There are those who consider that open correction from a superior is an infringe-

ment on the Papal Decree concerning manifestation of conscience. That decree has been much abused. If the Holy See commands it to be read before the community, it does also assume that those for whom it is read are of sound mind. There is a spiritual callousness, a kind of dull, immovable heartlessness which, when made conscious of itself by superiors, refuses to be reasonable, and does so at the expense of authority and by a claim of special lights. Such religious regard the "Manifestation" document as a personal communication of Papal infallibility to themselves. They will make capital out of it against superiors whom they dislike, and if, as sometimes happens, they get the ear of a confessor who hears

better on one side than the other, they enlist his sympathy. The immediate result is that the discordant wail is prolonged by the pressure of an additional weight on the key from without. It ought to be well understood that the directions contained in the document *Manifestatio* were not intended to lessen the confidence which religious children owe to and ordinarily feel toward their legitimate superiors who bear to them the relation of mothers or fathers, not only in spirituals but in temporals also. It was meant to check the possible abuse on the part of superiors who imprudently exact manifestations of conscience in matters of temptation or sin, which properly belong to the confessional. Now, if religion be any-

thing, it is a school of correction, and people who have no faults seem to have no business in a religious house; they ought to stay in the world, where their example may shine, or where their virtue can be tried and heralded for the edification of sinners.

A third manifestation of the pride that may find its way into religious houses is the habit of silent criticism. Criticism that is not *offensive* is a fine art. That is the kind which select souls who dislike the world cultivate most readily. While we *silently* comment on the shortcomings of our neighbor, we are making ravages in our own souls. There is one consolation in this habit: it may lead us to self-knowledge; for it is a curious fact that the faults which strike us most prominently in

others are invariably those of which we have an unconscious inheritance. It is a law of nature like that by which any one whom we can see in a mirror may see us in the same mirror, though we may not see ourselves.

But the art of criticism is not always an interior operation. Indeed, if nursed within, it often oozes out and becomes ill-natured. The most unlovable people, though they are often well-intentioned people, are those who are perpetually engaged in the ideal task of setting others right. They are like the *flats* in music, when these are out of place or needlessly multiplied; their wailings keep the melody in a perpetual *minor* key. Saints never do this sort of thing. They have a cheerful way of bearing the faults of others, or of

quietly setting the example of how things might be bettered, or of gently suggesting a different way. But they leave the ugly task of correcting the faults of others to superiors and monitors.

A good deal more mischief, however, is done by the *sharps*, when they are out of place, that is, by those who vent their testy mood by criticism, by bitter words, smarting ridicule,—in short, by being sharp with their tongues.

Parallel with the pride that indulges in the small ways of criticising others goes an aversion to being criticised. Now, there is nothing so valuable in all religious discipline as the genuine criticism which we can obtain of our actions. And why? Because before we can correct ourselves we must know ourselves. This is not an easy matter.

more difficult to learn than it is for others. There are certain natures gifted with talents, such as a good ear, or a light touch and a retentive memory, for musical pieces. They find it quite easy to play what they once hear or are taught. They need hardly any notes and no study, or very little, because they play by ear. To such players may be compared the religious who practise the virtue of charity in certain directions as if it came to them by nature. They love children; therefore children love them and can be managed by them. Such a natural disposition is nothing less than a vocation to a life of service for poor children, orphans, or foundlings. Others possess an inborn sympathy for the suffering, together with a certain tact and prudence. This fits

them for the service of the sick, and they feel an attraction to enter an Order in which they can spend their lives amid the miseries of a hospital. Others, again, have a natural reverence for the aged, which makes them anxious to serve them, ready to excuse their peculiarities, and willing to take upon themselves humiliations for the alleviation of the aged poor. This means a call to such service as God requires from religious like the Little Sisters of the Poor. But all these whom I have mentioned may be said to catch the divine melody by ear, and they can hardly do otherwise than follow the attraction of their vocation, so that, even if they were obliged to live in the world, they would seek the occupation of nurses or take a hand in organizing charitable

where there is obstinacy, there is proportionate ignorance; and that makes such cases almost hopeless, because it takes away the light which would make correction appear just and reasonable. Now, to say that a fault is incorrigible is almost heresy. Surely nothing ought to be incorrigible in religion. Indeed, there is one remedy, perhaps the only one for such disease of the will. We have already met it at the opening of these musical studies. The remedy for a native tendency to obstinacy is obedience, blind, unhesitating obedience. If we have ever been seriously told that we are of an obstinate disposition—then let us ask no more questions. Let us simply resolve, once for all, that we shall go by rule, without consulting our feelings, without arguing,

without hesitation, but promptly, like soldiers in the line marching to battle:

> Theirs not to make reply;
> Theirs not to reason why;
> Theirs but to do—and die.

Yes, die! For that means victory and life inasmuch as we fulfil the holy will of God, who with absolute certainty rewards docility and obedience.

And, indeed, obedience is the grand means to break our will, to combat the pride that took its origin from the *Non serviam*, "I will not serve," of an angel. That same pride finds its way into cloister and sanctuary. It has wrecked giants of Christian knowledge and mortification, like Tertullian, in their very pursuit of holiness. It has thrown a doubt about the ultimate fate of reformers, like Savonarola, who spent their

If you ask me what are "Études," I refer you to a dictionary. "Étude = a study, a lesson in music; a composition having *artistic* value and intended mainly to *exercise the pupil in overcoming some particular technical difficulty*." There you have it all. To produce a brilliant concert-effect we must apply ourselves to the Études. Let us devote some attention to this theme. Our object is to find some *helps in performing the religious task of teaching*. Accordingly we shall give our attention first of all to certain difficulties in the performance of our school-work. These difficulties may be likened to certain musical passages, fugues, and contrapuntal arrangements, which have not the air of easy melody, and must be overcome by careful analysis. They

have to be studied in order that the sacred concert may be a perfect success; for in Heaven nothing will be accepted but what is perfect.

If we have become familiar with these artistic parts and have mastered the Études with care and thoughtfulness, we shall have no difficulty in any other theme, whether it be the *sonatas* and grand *marches*, which by reason of their form and name suggest public performances that make considerable sound, or certain "Commencement" Exercises, of which I should like to say something, if I were not afraid of exasperating some good people. The practice of the Études will also render easy for us the meditations, fantasies, and serenades that elevate the heart in peaceful hours of rest, and which serve

Face, we find the solution to the one difficulty that remains—our temper, our native disposition, that makes us proud and obstinate, and will not let us bend in graceful obedience to the spirit and letter of our Rule.

Amidst it all we cannot lose sight of the fact that prayer is our last resort. It is infallible. Not the prayer of the lip so much as the steady invocations that rise like incense from a heart burning with desire of perfection, with the desire of being relieved of those habits which hinder us from giving our whole selves to God and rendering efficient service to our neighbor. Even if our faults be not mere transient results of impulse, but arise from some perversity of nature which had been allowed to grow into a habit, before we recog-

nized its humiliating power over us, and which dominates our actions like an evil spirit, we still have ample reason for confidence in the loving power of our Lord, who can change the whole nature, and drive out the evil, if we only appeal to Him with *humble* confidence. *Cor mundum crea in me Deus!* "Create a new heart in me, O God!"

Organ Pipes and Stops.

In the process of tuning the grand organ to which we compared the Religious Life, we began by examining the separate keys. This helped us to ascertain whether the tones which these keys sounded were correct and clear, and also whether there was not some mechanical defect, perhaps a warping or a swelling of the material, which might

sanctification which suffices for the contemplative.

The religious of our teaching orders, however, profess more than their own sanctification. They are not contemplatives merely, receiving and feeding upon the full light of divine grace, like the fixed star; but they are like the planets, which, whilst shedding the light received, determine at the same time the motion and lightsome progress of others around them. They not only move along the straight, well-determined, and narrow path that leads to salvation, but they make that path clear and accessible to others, thus following the Divine Sun, Christ, who said, not simply "I am the truth and the life," but likewise "I am the way."

Now, the idea of progress implies

that of perfectibility, of betterment, of change, not only in ourselves, but also in those whose motion and life we influence and determine by education. Heat, which is identical with motion, affects the metal in the crucible, reducing it to liquid, and thus rendering it capable of adaptation to the forms which surround it. This change does not lessen the quality or value of the metal, but it enhances it. Thus, whilst religious persons aiming at their own sanctification may remain isolated, unaffected by the changes around them, the members of the active, and, most of all, the teaching orders, aiming at becoming instruments of knowledge, vessels dealing out wisdom unto others, can not remain impervious to the influences around them. By allowing themselves,

the quality and the pitch of the different notes are regulated, and unless these stops are in good order and can be pulled in and out with ease, the organist is helpless, for no matter how much you beat on the keys they are silent and seem useless.

Now the pipes or reeds of the grand organ of the Religious Life are the *Rules* and Constitutions of an Order. It is through the Religious Rules that the *Divine Spirit breathes His Will* in regular order and in absolute correspondence with the will and purpose of Christ, the Master who presides over the organ of the Religious Community, ready to make use of our service for producing His heavenly melodies. As the pipes of an organ are fixed and so located that the air can pass through

them at the call or motion of the organist, so the Rules of the Religious Institute are fixed and approved in a way which makes them the ordinary medium of communicating God's inspirations and the breath of His Divine Will.

But we saw that the air currents which pass through the pipes and reeds of the organ are operated by means of stops, which open the little valves attached to the pipes arranged in various groups. Just so are the Rules of the Religious Life made to work by means of stops which open the way to the inspirations and directions of the Holy Ghost, so that our holy Rule becomes the manifestation of the Divine Will in our regard.

And what are these stops by which

essential part of that religious life which the members of the teaching Orders have assumed, under the Divine guidance, as their means of special sanctification.

In recognizing this fact we merely recognize the action of God in His own creation. Take the vine-fruit which the Heavenly Gardener has planted and ripened on the golden hillsides of sunny Burgundy. The amber creaming liquid distilled from its grape has a rare fragrance and a wondrously health-giving strength. French emigrants, eager to increase the yield of this gift of nature, have taken perfect specimens of the vine to California, where the mountains slope and the white soil shines like the chalky elevations of their own Mont Rachet; and they dealt with their transplanted

sprigs as they would deal with the young growth raised on their own native soil, —sheltering, nourishing, pruning with care; yet the first result was a wine as dry and bitter as vinegar. Then they varied the treatment, added grape-sugar during the fermentation, or by the application of heat interrupted the process which turns the natural sugar of the grape into alcohol, and there came forth a mellow wine promising to rival that of the mother soil. These viticulturists did not change the plant, but they adapted their treatment of it to the new climate and the new conditions of the soil, thus reaching the same results as their trade taught them to look for at home.

We realize, then, that such changes in the art of educating are a necessity

become habituated to prayer, there is very little difficulty in being religious. The fledglings only get occasional glimpses of rough work actually done; for the older members of the order, in a spirit of charity and patience (for which they are as a rule specially selected), carry the main burdens, whilst they tutor the novices into the ways of their future religious duties. Then comes the day for taking the vows which are supposed to imply the actual sacrifices to which the candidate pledges fidelity for life. What vows are they? Obedience, chastity, poverty! They are grand acts of renunciation—written on parchment and made in all solemnity amid an assembled crowd of admirers, before the Bishop. And what do they entail upon the heroic

soul that pronounces them? This: first of all, she casts away the vanity of the world, in the shape of a satin dress specially-made for the occasion. Then she sacrifices the beautiful tresses, which, in case they are needed, will grow again. And then she is permitted to live, rent-free, in a large apartment house; cooks, porters, maids of all work are duly provided; she won't have to pay these, nor can they leave her at short notice. In fact, she will not have to trouble herself about bank accounts, or the wages question at all; and if she needs money, she gets it brought her in a purse, with a chaperon to help in the shopping. She is not obliged to give alms, or fees, or audiences to disgruntled callers. She is relieved of all the tyranny of fashion in procuring season-

able dress goods; is always provided with a most becoming suit, free of charge. The doctor comes if she needs him, and he has the good sense not to send her any bills. Everybody outside the community treats her as a lady. She gets credit in a sort of way for all the virtues which are practised by the members of the community in which she lives, and, indeed, for whatever distinguished the saints whom she is supposed to imitate; and many people fairly coddle the dear heroic soul by their evidences of admiration and kindness. What on earth can any person this side of heaven want beyond this? People of the world have to struggle for existence. If they have money, they can do no better than keep a good house, eat and drink moderately, and

dress decently. If they desire peace of mind and health of body, they must enjoy these things with a certain amount of restraint; but at best they can hardly ever be without anxiety about their fortunes and their future. They may find a boarding-house as respectable as our cloister, but none that is wholly free from troubles. They have ordinarily little help and less sympathy such as a religious experiences. The world is a hard task-master and a rude critic, even whilst it flatters. It comes to all this, that if seculars wish to guard themselves against remorse, misfortune, or disease, they must practically observe the three vows, though they have never made them on parchment; and they are obliged to stand by their daily duties, and choke down

resentment under much more trying circumstances than can be the case in a religious community, where spiritual motives are constantly suggested to the individual, and where ordinarily all burdens are lifted from the conscience that has the courage to make a confidante of a superior or monitor.

So after all there is not so very much that is heroic or uncommon about our profession of poverty, which leaves us quite comfortable; nor about our vow of chastity, which simply means putting a healthy restraint on our senses and avoiding the risks of married life; whilst our obedience is nothing more than prudent subjection to the will of another who tries to make our duty as agreeable to us as possible and carries half the work and all the burden of

responsibility. Surely we cannot flatter ourselves that we are doing anything extraordinary, unless we are ready if need be to embrace the hardships of poverty — to meet the disagreeable burdens of our mission with the view of subduing our sensual nature; and to obey when obedience is not simply carrying out our own notions of right and expediency. The clerk in an office is ordered to stay at the place and engage in the work pointed out to him—and he readily obeys; the soldier in the army, and the official in the civil service are assigned to a post—and they obey; the religious is ordered to a poor mission, to an uncongenial work, and to associations which may require patience, charity, a keeping up of kindly judgment, and a good measure of their

Master's endless longanimity. Could it be anything but inconsistency and a low estimate of the obligation of the religious vocation which was meant to serve the common interests of God's kingdom, to hesitate, pout, grumble, or even protest against being placed where the Master needs us?

Some organs have *sham stops*, just as they have sham pipes. They are meant for show. But our organ, the grand instrument under God's all-knowing care, does not permit such arrangements. Every stop is supposed to be active and to yield readily to the hand which moves it out of its socket, or to return to its place whenever it is not wanted. It follows therefore that a good religious, like an efficient stop, will go out of a house or a mission to

another, and stop there, until recalled by the superior who acts as the hand of the Divine Organist in charge of the movement. "Stay here with Me!" said God to Moses![1] And the wise son of Sirach instructing those who would aim at perfection admonishes them to "stand firm in the lot before thee—be steadfast in thy covenant, and grow old in the work that is commanded thee."[2] Our covenant is written not only upon the page of the volume which registered our vows, but in the recording Heart of the Spouse to whom we were wedded in everlasting bond of fidelity engaging us in a service of renunciation and self-denial.

But we know all this, and it sounds tedious to repeat it. Nevertheless, we

1 Deut. 5 : 31.
2 Eccl. 17 : 21, and 11 : 21.

must convince ourselves that, unless we conform to the method of the organ stops, and permit our action to be regulated as to place, occupation, or the associates assigned us, we are *mute keys*, and shall give forth no sound; and in that case it matters little how finely polished our ivory or ebony texture may appear on the surface of the manual or key-board. We have to coöperate with the work of the institute, making efforts to produce harmony, by toleration, by cheerful pocketing of our sensitiveness, by brisk readiness to assist in any task that needs our help, sometimes by being trod upon—for in all large organs *there must be pedals that are operated by the feet.* Unless we are prepared for all this, our existence on the key-board is a

mere pretence, and we should be nothing better than boarders in a sort of free lodge establishment; whereas, we claim to bear Christ's burden, and as a badge of our vocation actually carry a cross about us which tells the world that we have renounced the comforts of earth to take up daily the hardships of self-denial, of labor for the poor, the weak, and the ignorant—in which God meant to include the members of our order. Indeed our companions in the house where we live are the only ones to come near enough to us for a real test of our professed aim at virtue and perfection.

If any of my readers, not conversant with the details of organ construction, should be tempted to look into a manual of instruction for playing the

organ, he or she would discover that there are many kinds of stops; just as there are many kinds of places or houses, duties, associations to which religious may be assigned for service, and which may be styled their stops. There are *foundation* and *mutation* stops. The *foundation* stops and *mutation* stops in religion supply the reason why certain members are allowed to stay in the same place and others are moved about. The organ is built that way; and hence no amount of questions "why?"—and of those creative inventions of the imagination called rash judgments—will bring any other answer but this, that we are out of order unless we conform to the arrangement of the superiors, who govern; and that, right or wrong, our interference or assertion

of self-will is sure to create a want of harmony, which displeases the Divine Master, who alone manages this sacred instrument. The Jesuits have inherited from the maker of their Rule an expression which characterizes the disposition of a subject sent on any mission at the command of the superior: *Perinde ac cadaver*—that is, they will let themselves be moved to any mission "like a dead body;" which dead body revives and quietly takes upon itself all the work it can stand, as soon as it gets to the place assigned.

There are any number of *minor* stops to every good organ which help to make magnificent music when fully drawn out at the proper time. They have different names. On our organ some of them are:

Stop—your natural attachment to material things (keep-sakes, books, patterns, etc.)

Stop—your attachment to certain practices of devotion, when they interfere with the order of things around you.

Stop—Your attachment to members of your family. The injunction of the Master: "*He* that does not leave . . ." is meant for nuns also.

Stop—your manifestation of preferences, attention for persons to whom you are drawn by favors or services or who please you by their natural gifts of disposition.

Stop—your search for news. Novelties like "ragtime music" are not in the repertory of our Heavenly Organist.

But I hear a pious remonstrance: "Stop, please. We know it all from Rodriguez, and from the meditation books, and from the Rules." Very well. It would take too long, any way, to go through the whole list of *stops*, for there are sixty-one for *manual* keyboards, which apply to religious who make no particular profession of seeking extraordinary humiliations. For the latter there are twenty to thirty extra stops to regulate the *pedal* keyboard. These are only for the very lowly and humble servants of the Lord who hardly ever come into the light of day — the cloistered nuns and monks who labor in the sweat of their brows, content to contribute unseen to the magnificent harmony of Catholic charity.

But there is one arrangement to which we shall have to give a moment's attention, if things are to go right in the playing, later on. That one thing is

The Swells.

Probably the name is suggestive enough, so that the apparatus needs very little examination. The swells on an organ are a mechanical contrivance by which the loudness of tones may be varied, so that the sound of a note can be made to increase (*crescendo*) or decrease (*diminuendo*) gradually. This produces a fine effect in music, and gives power and emphasis to certain movements in the melody upon which the attention is settled.

In a religious organ there is a corresponding effect produced by well

regulated activity. This activity is stimulated by zeal, and the *various forms of zeal* are what I should call *swells*. Zeal has a tendency to swell without allowing itself to be regulated. And therein lies its danger. The most ordinary form of human zeal is to start in with a *crescendo* movement. Noise advertises. It forces attention from the sleepy and quiet folk. It rouses expectation—but, alas! God's ways are quiet ways. The zeal that begins with all the trumpets in full blast, and with a loud *crescendo* swell is sure to flag before long, and turn into an unlooked for *diminuendo*. It is a remarkable fact, in the history of all great and lasting movements for good, that they began very humbly, grew quietly, often out of apparent failures,

and had nothing to indicate their power or future influence except that mark of vitality which showed that there was a *growth* which came from some principle or energy *within*. It is possible to bring together stones for a large pile in a much shorter space of time than it takes an acorn to spring its tiny sprout. But the one is a large dead mass, unproductive, often a hindrance to the planter, whilst the latter is the beginning of a series of living organisms that in the progress of ages, from millionfold multiplied seeds, create a forest, furnish ships and houses, and play their part in the great events of a world's industrial life.

We like to create, to build, probably because God, the Creator, fashioned us in His own likeness. The

world estimates its probabilities of success upon display, and hence we are easily moved to let our zeal for developing our work follow the direction of outward show of success. That is an error, and it endangers the spirit of religious life, just as the accumulated load of heavy material with which we build is apt to smother the living plant that grows under it.

Yet whilst it is a deceptive principle that a fine appearance is an essential element producing an increase of the means by which the work of our Institute will prosper heavenward, we must not suppose that religious communities are to neglect those provisions for the educational and charitable necessities of their charge which answer to the needs and demands of modern

economic life. But there ought to be no disproportion between the means and the attempt. All the religious orders, without exception, that have survived their foundations and become a power by means of the evangelical counsels, began their great works with an almost shocking disregard for appearances or impressions. They simply *worked*, *worked*, *worked*. And somehow their work arrested the attention of those who could at once facilitate their efficiency in a wider circle. Few of the founders of our orders not mendicant ever begged. They simply went about doing what they could for the charges they had taken up, improving their souls and the souls of others in a quiet, unostentatious way. Then came the influence of thoughtful people,

and the money came, and with it members flocked to the Institute to have a share in the noble work of personal sanctification and charity. Out of this grew that sort of success which leaves its immortal imprint upon the history of religious achievement.

But enough has been said about this arrangement of the swells which, if only properly managed, adds to the beautiful expression of the musical theme. Its effect depends on the moderation with which it is managed, with due regard to time, and place, and circumstances. It is hardly meant to be used by beginners.

The Scale.

We have spent a considerable amount of time in examining the organ, first

that we might ascertain whether it needed tuning. Our Lord, who indicates to us by the touch of His divine hand the keys which sound the various notes, is Himself our guide in this process of tuning.

Next we have seen how He manages the stops and the swells, in order that He might rouse His creatures to proper action and well-controlled zeal.

Let us assume that this great instrument has, under our Lord's direction, been restored to perfect order. If, as a result of His scrutinizing discipline, it has happened that a key here and there received a little hard thumping, it was all intended to make us realize one primary fact in conventual life—namely, that the most essential quality required in a member of a religious community

is the readiness to yield on all occasions to the necessary pressure of humiliations. Humility is the key of the Gate of Heaven. But *humility* can never come to us except through *humiliations*. God may bestow on us as a birth-gift a gentle disposition; He may preserve in us the spirit of simplicity, and both these qualities of nature are indeed the soil and atmosphere of humility; but He can never give us the virtue of humility. That virtue must be *acquired*, must be learnt: "Learn from Me that I am meek and humble of heart!" And the learning means effort, and the effort consists in training ourselves to bear humiliations. The things that are most hard upon our sensitiveness; the things that we feel most repugnance to do when duty and

common sense, or the better custom of charity and urbanity, prescribe them for us,—the doing of these things is that which helps us to humility by the shortest and hence the easiest path. There is a longer and in the end a harder path to humility. I will show it to you.

When we have shirked habitually the little tasks and acts that hurt our sensitiveness; when we have managed for a long time to avoid the things that cause unpleasant grating on our feelings and prejudices; when we have found and hold a way of escaping by arguments and manœuvres through small crooked ways, certain persons whom we dislike, or certain duties which don't particularly cover us with glory, then our superiors, or those who have charge of us, or are connected with us in daily life, gradually

get accustomed to humor us quietly. They let us have our way for peace's sake. "She doesn't like it, Mother," or "She is too sensitive, we must spare her," or "We don't know how she would take it if we sent her: she might make a scene, and compromise the house," or "She is a little sulky to-day, and it would hardly do to ask her"—this is what our friends, though not within our hearing, say to each other. And we, being thus shielded from the test and trial which might reveal to us our infirmity, imagine that we are nearing the gate that opens Paradise. Never a bit ruffled, always so composed, ever doing what we are asked—oh, we are grand!—But it never occurs to us that nobody asks us to do what we dislike to do. Our superiors and companions

spare us that experiment, especially when they have once or twice been witnesses of the quality of our temper, which in some natures is noisily explosive and in others quietly petrifying. Yet if our human superiors and brethren spare us, unto our own loss, not so the Divine Organist. He waits a long and silent while, and then He rouses us from our lethargy by a sudden shake. What self-inflicted penalty did not attempt to cure, that He, in His love for us, cures by a species of *suffering*, in which He shows us what we are. We had imagined that we could avoid humiliations; had wrapped ourselves in a mantle of self-approval that did not permit criticism to make us blush or to confuse us; we had enjoyed peace by reason of a permanent sign-board

put up at the entry to our spiritual preserves, which told everybody: Don't say anything to hurt my feelings; don't ask me to do anything that goes against my grain, or makes me stoop too low, or reach too high. I am sensitive, and Father Faber says somewhere that saints are made out of sensitive stuff—so don't apply here with your humiliations; they are not needed!

Now the sufferings which undo this species of ingrained spiritual self-indulgence, and which God has devised for that purpose, are of a peculiarly trying sort. I said that when we avoided the short way of braving disagreeable things, and of waging war against our sensitiveness, God finds Himself forced to lead us by a long way. He does with us what men do with horses that balk

at certain places in the road. They lead the animal round about, or make it thoroughly tired and hungry, so that it forgets the imaginary evil through the pressure of a more real need. The long way by which God leads us in the given case is the path of sickness and pain — either of body or soul. About the humiliating power of the former I need say nothing. As to the latter, the agony of a sick heart or soul, it is a way which usually begins with abnormal scrupulosity, widens gradually into spiritual darkness and desolation of soul. It is a pain so torturing to the spirit that often it drives the soul near to despair, and it bears with it horrors which give us some conception of what hell may be without any fire, simply as a result of our missing

the light of God's dear presence. No more of it here. It is an ugly subject to dwell on when we should discourse rather on the harmony of our religious life; but I had to mention it in order to warn those who believe that humility is a gift like those ordinary endowments which render our natural disposition more or less agreeable in the eyes of others.

Humility as a virtue (and before it becomes a habit by frequent repetitions of humiliations) requires personal efforts, personal courage, and a determined readiness to meet humiliations as a condition of our earthliness. Those who imagine that this delightful virtue of the Sacred Heart may enter their souls by a sort of infusion, or even as a return for prayer (without simulta-

neous waging of war on our sensitiveness), are mistaken. If we may judge from ordinary experience, it would take more prayers to get the right grain of humility into a heart that has given lodging to the habit of pride than a whole community can say in a lifetime. This is strong language, but it is true. God gives us, in answer to our earnest prayer, sufficient grace to take and practise humiliations, but humility is quite another thing; it implies a conscious appreciation, a sort of satisfaction at being humiliated. Not that it does not always pain us to be humiliated; it would not be humiliation if it did not smart; but one may learn to love pain for a higher gain, or for the sake of some beloved one who is dearer to us than we are to our dear

selves. It is the way a soldier comes to love the hardships of war that he might share in the victory for his country; it is the way a mother loves her child, ready to give her health and life for its preservation. Such love must be cultivated by endurance, and the pounding and beating we get in religion as a school of correction is the way to cultivate it. Many a confession, thoughtful, earnest, resolute; many a retreat which sharpens the edge of our self-inspection, is needed to make us even admit that for us individually there is need of humiliation because there is need of humility.

If, then, the tuning has the effect of teaching us that there is something wrong about our religious life, and that in order to set it right we must bestir

ourselves, making some sacrifice of our self-will and of our comfort, we shall have gained a good deal in the way of rightly preparing for the grand symphony concert which will be our joy in heaven.

However, we cannot be tuning all the time; that, indeed, would be tiresome. So we must go farther in our endeavor to learn something.

The first thing the Master does, when the organ has been tuned, is to run his fingers over the keys in regular order. "His volant touch, instinct through all proportions, low and high," flies up and down the resonant board. He plays the scale. It is not music exactly, but only a sort of trial of the sounds and chords. Ordinarily the scale is played by beginners for the

purpose of practice. Our Lord needs no practice. He only tests the sound of our heart. Still if *He* does not stand in need of practice, *we* surely do. He must go over the scale for our sakes, so that imitating His method we may get into the right ways, and by dint of repetition attain that perfection which belongs to our state, and which is the result of constant rising upon the ladder of the evangelical virtues. For the Religious Life is not only a school of correction, where all defects are eliminated by persistent study of ourselves, and by warfare against our passions and wayward inclinations; but the Religious Life is likewise a workshop of perfection. In fact, the two things—namely, correction and perfection—are only two names for the same thing; for perfection

is attained by means of correction, just as the beauty of a marble statue results from the judicious strokes of the chisel which knocks off the corners and the roughness.

Now just as the keys of the organ represent a religious community which seeks perfection by means of correction, so may we regard these same keys as representing the scale or ladder by which this perfection is gradually reached. The scale is a very commonplace exercise, and a little bit tedious. But it is quite necessary to practise it constantly for a long time, every day, and sometimes for several hours a day. Even old players find it good exercise for the fingers frequently to run over the scale.

The scale (diatonic) is a succession

of eight notes. There is a certain prescribed order about it. It represents gradual progress, and thus is, as has already been said, an image of the progressive stages toward perfection made by the individual soul. Perfection in virtue, as in music, is at first slow work. We must be patient with ourselves; later on we might take our part in the *sonatas* and those magnificent inspirations of genius which awaken our longings for that heavenly paradise, of whose joys they are faint echoes coming in snatches to our poor earth.

In the ordinary scale the first and the last notes, called octave, have the same name, and the same accord; with only this difference, that the last note is much higher in pitch. There are quite a number of octaves on the

keyboard, so that we can play several scales. But we shall take only one for the time, beginning with the easiest of all, which is called the natural scale.

The octave begins with *C* and it ends with *C*. The *C*harity of the Christian and the *C*harity of the Religious are the two terms of its whole extent. Between these two, the first *C* and the octave *C*, there lie a number of virtues leading us by successive steps from natural, or *Common Charity*, to *Christ-like Charity*. St. Paul enumerates the various qualities of true Charity (1 Cor. 13). His words sound like touches upon the strings of a harp which he holds close to his bosom; one after the other he strikes the chords, lingering over the sounds as though they issued from his heart

rather than from the instrument. "Charity is patient—is kind; charity envieth not—dealeth not perversely—is not puffed up; charity is not ambitious—seeketh not her own—is not provoked to anger—thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth—beareth all things—believeth all things—hopeth all things—endureth all things. Charity never falleth away, whether prophecies shall be made void, or tongues shall cease, or knowledge shall be destroyed; there remain faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greater of these is charity." What a wealth of sweet accords is encompassed by this eulogy of the virtue of *charity!*

But we must not forget our scale, despite the fact that the subject is (like

the practice) a little monotonous after you have gone over it a few times. Perhaps we might vary it a little by adopting the method of a dear, gentle monk who lived many centuries (nearly ten) ago, in an Italian. town of the beautiful valley through which the Arno runs; I mean the town of Arezzo, where Petrarch was born and sang his happy sonnets in after years. The good monk's name was Guido. He was very fond of music; indeed, a great master, both of its art and science. Like many of us, he had to teach—mostly music, also other things; but with all of them together he wanted to teach piety. Naturally he began with the scale, which he considered the basis of good practice in singing and playing. Since his pupils in the old Tuscan con-

vent were all aiming at a life of perfection and saw in their studies and practice of music only a means of glorifying God, it occurred to Brother Guido of Arezzo to change the names of the notes, so that they might recall some devout thoughts to those who pronounced them. Instead of calling the notes by the letters of the alphabet, *C*,–*D*,–*E*, and so forth, he gave them their names from some verses of a beautiful hymn in honor of St. John the Baptist, which he was in the habit of singing whilst his fingers were running over the scale on his harp. Here are the verses; they are Latin:

Ut queant laxis
*Re*sonare fibris
*Mi*ra gestorum
*Fa*muli tuorum,
*Sol*ve polluti
*La*bii reatum,
*Sa*ncte Joannes!

These lines, addressed to St. John, mean: "Chasten, dear saint, our hearts and lips; and attune our lyres, in order that we, thy servants, may chant thy noble life with sweet accord."

Now, the first syllables of these verses became the names by which the keys or notes of the scale were known —*Ut–Re–Mi–Fa–Sol–La–Sa*, and the eighth was *Ut*, repeated for the octave. This system had, as already suggested, the advantage that it was calculated to arouse pious thoughts and aspirations in the young Benedictine novices of Guido's school and choir.

I take these names for our scale, the scale of charity, with only the slight changes by which later practice adapted the musical system of the good monk Guido to modern convenience. For

Ut, the first note, musicians of to-day use more commonly *Do*, which is somewhat easier in singing, because it ends in a vowel. Hence, instead of calling the notes C,–D,–E, and so forth, as we have been accustomed, let us take Brother Guido's method and call them Do–Re–Mi–Fa–Sol–La–Si (Sa)–Do.

Do, Re, Mi.

When we practise the scale, we run the fingers of the right hand up and down; but how? There are five fingers, and they have to strike in regular succession eight notes. The way we do (in the *C* scale) is to strike Do-Re-Mi with the first three fingers in order; then we bend back the fingers and strike the next note with the first finger (thumb), following up

the remaining four notes with the four remaining fingers. In other words, we cover the scale in *two parts*, or sections; first, we take three notes as our basis, and then we take the other five notes by putting all the fingers of our whole hand to it. Get somebody to show you how it is done. Nearly all the nuns know. . . . Just so we ascend the scale of Christ's charity in two parts — first, by settling upon three general principles:

Do	Re	Mi
Do!	*Renounce!*	*Minister!*

This means: Be active! Deny yourselves! Serve others!

On general principles, therefore, our charity must be *active;* of course, I mean intelligently active. You know

that it is quite possible for persons to have what is called a *charitable disposition* without much actual charity. Such people are good at approving charitable undertakings; they can suggest any amount of things that might be done; they even direct them and collect money for them from others. Most of the time, however, they content themselves with encouraging such things and lamenting their inability to take a hand; or they find, at the last moment, that rheumatism, or a dreadful cold, or some disastrous freak of the elements has interfered with their most charitable intentions. Such there are in the world.

Ordinarily, this class of saints is not disposed to enter religion. But when, by some misunderstanding of themselves and of their spiritual guardians,

they do pass through the convent gate and the novitiate, they will make themselves conspicuous in one of two ways. They are advocates of words, of promises, of suggestions. They are always interested and seemingly active; but if you count up results, there is nothing done. They might accomplish a world of good if they had not so many schemes *for others*, which particular characteristic gives to their zeal the *air* of disinterested charity, without the essential quality of *Do!*

But there is another category of these saints that fail in the exercise of our scale by omitting the *Do*. They incline the other way. They really don't make many words at any time. Theirs is a sort of *contemplative* mood of charity, waiting for eternal *rest*.

Yet they are equally disinterested. They don't mind how much others have to flit around and worry for their sakes, either to do the things left undone or unfinished, on account of their tranquil sanctity, or because it is necessary to make them comfortable so as to prevent dirges and lamentations which fit in quite well with the restful piety of such dispositions. Religious of this kind are very hard to manage. It is not quite their own fault that they are what they are; but they are in the wrong place in a religious community, unless some new order outside the *Do* scale can be found or founded where ravens provide bread and butter, and some other things not included in the provisions miraculously sent to some of the holy anchorites. At the same

time, there is no class of devout people so endowed with the apparent halo of thoughtfulness, abandonment to God's Providence, quiet self-possession, and general restfulness, as these dear angelics who never consciously make a disturbance, and never change their ways. Alas! they are like dead weights in the road of spiritual progress to a community. They never realize that they were created to win the kingdom of heaven by violence and by labor and self-denial. Unlike those who are perpetually thinking about others, but never doing for others, they are neither thinking nor doing. They are too tired for that. It would seem they were born tired and never got quite rested. So they have been all along waiting for a good doze, which they

are apt to keep on wanting, — who knows, — even after purgatory has begun; although the hot floors there may make them hustle about. As I said, they are not wicked — that would require some conscious energy; and they are ordinarily of good will, which is the one hopeful feature that gives them the prospect of ultimately attaining what they so much long for — eternal rest in heaven.

If you ask me how such persons ever find their way into an *active* order, when there are so many *contemplative* institutes naturally inviting their patronage, I should answer that the latter are as a rule more cautious in their diagnosis of the particular quality of piety which applicants with this restful disposition exhibit, before

admission to the community is given the latter. It may seem odd, but it is true, nevertheless, that piety and laziness are easily confounded in certain natures. You see, it is this way. Young folk, such as a modest-looking girl or a quiet boy, in a Christian family, unless they are exceptionally circumstanced, are apt to be helped along by everybody during the first years of their lives. If, through lack of animal spirits, they don't do any serious mischief as they grow up, people will say of the girl, "She's a regular saint," or, "She would look lovely in a veil," or, in the case of the boy, "He is a regular Aloysius," or, "He ought to be a Jesuit." The young innocents are carried along on the wings of popular favor by their immediate friends;

they are not allowed to do anything for themselves, except perhaps to go to church often, which is moderate exercise. So the habit of restfulness grows and the delicate frame shapes itself accordingly, until peace and contentment and moderation shine out of countenance and movement. Now the youth and the maiden feel that under such considerations the earth is not good enough for them; and the thought is of course right, provided it proceeds from a proper estimate of eternal things and from a sense of one's heavenly destiny. But the "eternal destiny" is forgotten in this case. At all events our young saints have heard or read that religion is the abode of rest for the weary pilgrim of earth. Hence their thoughts go out to some convent

or monastery where they may take refuge from the wicked world. To their inexperienced imagination, the cloister is an abode where there is no business bustle or workaday noise, no dust or dirt, so that it is never necessary for people to tuck up their sleeves. The nuns always look so clean and neat, as if their laundry work were done in heaven; and as for the monks, if they don't always seem very prim and tidy, it is just as good an argument for rest, since it is an evidence that there are no collars or coifs or gimps to be washed or ironed. The thought of getting the bliss of earth and heaven so nicely combined, of finding in a religious house a sort of depot where the inmates are provided with a spiritual carriage, like that of Elias, to take them

to heaven, and that on zephyrs, without shaking them out of their gentle doze during the interval, is deliciously attractive. So they drift that way. They consult, of course, a spiritual director. He encourages the design, unless he has positive reason to think the young devotees are moved by premature enthusiasm; a thing which seems out of the question here, because of the natural repose of the applicants. He gives them a letter of recommendation, in which he praises their fathers and mothers and also the candidates' pious endeavor to give themselves to God. The letter concludes with a few conventional phrases of hopeful assurance, springing from the conviction that the superior of the convent will have time to find out all that is required before

the final profession is made. Religious superiors who trust these recommendations more than their personal experience warrants may have to blame themselves. Confessors are not supposed to be omniscient, no matter how nice they are. God has reserved that gift to Himself. . . . When the young candidates have passed some weeks within the convent, they begin to suspect two things: First, that they may have to *Do* something before long, if they wish to earn and retain the title of religious as a preliminary to that sanctity which is the only passport to the rest and joy of Paradise; and, secondly, that the superior and others, including even the chaplain, and the porter who usually knows everything else, are all wofully ignorant or mali-

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ciously oblivious of the good qualities for which the newcomer was celebrated in his or her family. Outside in the wicked world people knew how to admire virtue, especially when it came so naturally and gracefully as in this case; but here in the convent people seem to be pretty ignorant or dull of perception, and one gets no credit or praise; in fact, one often has to do things and let others get the credit for them, or to take a snub for attempting to get credit. The new novice has resolved to paint something or write poetry for Reverend Mother's feastday, and offers her services; the Mistress says: "Never mind, dear. Scrub the blackboard which our good Lay Sister Virida spent an hour this morning (and a can of oil) in polishing. But do it

quickly, dear, before the children come in for arithmetic." It is a ruthless way of killing genius; but it is the way of benighted Mistresses in the school of correction called a Religious House, where genius seems to be of no account.

We cannot dwell longer on this note, and probably it is unnecessary—though a good deal more could be said on the subject. Anyhow, to be inactive in a Religious House is against the principle of charity: that is the thought we have to keep in mind.

Re.

The second fundamental principle of Christian charity is *Re*nunciation. Indeed, it is the very essence of religion.

Every page of the *Following of Christ* is a repetition of the injunction of our Divine Master: "He who would come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me." It implies a willingness, a readiness to set aside those comforts, to cut off those avenues of flattery, to separate from those friends and companions that hold our heartstrings tied to the earth, whilst our profession and our movement are intended to be heavenward.

But who of us does not know it? We hear it every day in one form or another. What we need only is to *Do*, to reduce to practice this injunction of self-denial which is the second rung in our ladder to heaven. Yes; the second key in our *Do* scale is *Re*nunciation.

Mi.

The third quality upon which charity rests is represented, as already indicated, by the third note in the scale. It is the spirit of *Mi*nistry. The Christian life is a service, a ministry, in a twofold sense. First of all, we are to serve God. He is our Lord and our Judge as well as our Redeemer and Rewarder. Hence we owe Him subjection, and it is our wisest policy to give Him our best service. He will not forget any neglect on our part, but He will remember with magnificent generosity every token of affectionate obedience to His wishes. If He is severe with the servant who ties up his talents in a napkin, lacking industry, He repays a hundredfold the service of him who doubles his capital of talents.

To be ready to serve God ought to be comparatively easy, when we know Him. Great and generous lords are pleasant masters, especially when they are not always at home, letting us have a good deal of liberty in the house we inhabit. And although God is really everywhere, He does not intrude His vigilant commands and eyes upon us in the way earthly masters are apt to do; hence we feel a kind of security, as if He were far away.

Still He has left some substitutes in His place, with the command that we serve them like Himself. With these we do not get on so easily. Our entire trouble is therefore with this substitute service. "Be ye subject to man for God's sake, not only to the good and gentle, but to the froward also!" says

the Apostle of the Gentiles. But then he spoke to servants. Yes; but he supposed every Christian to be willing to be another's servant. Our Saviour, from whom St. Paul drew all his inspirations and instructions, on the eve of His death, had said to His Apostles, as He washed their feet: "You call Me Master, and Lord: and you say well, for so I am. If then I, your Master and Lord, wash your feet, you must also wash one another's feet."

The washing of feet was the service of hospitality and an indication of that charity which is preëminently kind; not with the kindness of condescension, but with the kindness of humility, which bends to the neighbor and the stranger, because it sees in them the representatives of Christ: "What you have

done to the least of these, you have done to Me."

Probably I should say a word about this kindness, which constitutes the marrow of Christian service, and is therefore inseparable from the true ministry of the religious life.

It is quite possible for us to be ready and obliging servants of others and yet to fail utterly in fulfilling the service or ministry of Christian charity toward them. Take what we could call an exceptionally good and able religious, who is self-denying, mortified, and active. Fine schools, convents, asylums, and so forth, attest his or her zeal and efficiency; and all this has been done with great labor and without any self-interest or personal gain, in view of the fact that an order from the Provincial

or General may remove this religious at any moment from the locality and from the rank of manager. What the latter had in mind all along was to serve others, to make them as comfortable as the religious rule and the spirit of the order permit. Yet such a religious may lack the essential quality of ministry contemplated in our scale of charity, because he or she lacks the spirit of kindness. Indeed, we might be wonderfully mortified and be very gifted people, whom the world loves to style "saints;" we might teach with the mellifluous power of an Ambrose or a Chrysostom; might deliver our bodies to be burnt—and all this from pure motives of a faith that could move mountains; yet our service of God might still fall very short, because of

the lack of kindness in our ministry of charity. There are religious, holy people, not canonized, who, as Father Faber says somewhere, would convert ten where they now only lessen the prejudices of one, if to their uncommon graces they would add a little common kindness. And that which makes charity kind is the manner, the genial way, and the thoughtfulness that accompany the disinterested act. Kindness is never querulous; it is considerate; it watches for opportunities; it falls like the dew of heaven, gently, and cools, and helps the growth, and has a fair sparkle in the sunlight.

But we must go on, though I may have to mention this fundamental quality of kindness as part of true charity again briefly.

We have sounded

Do — Re — Mi

Do — Renounce — Minister.

When we have these three principles well fixed in our minds, we may go on with our exercise, in the hope of becoming capable of following our Lord, so as to render ourselves fit to accompany Him at the grand symphony concert amid the angelic choirs in heaven.

Fa, Sol, La, Si, Do.

There remain still five notes in the octave, which we must at least rapidly touch before we come to the conclusion of our scale.

Out of the threefold duty to do, to renounce, and to serve, which we have thus far considered, there grow five

virtues. Perhaps I should call them rather qualities or modes of virtue, since they consist not so much in *what we do* as in the *way we do* things. Here they are: *Steadiness*, *Faithfulness*, *Joyfulness*, *Sisterly Spirit* (Community Spirit), and finally *Christ's Spirit*, which is the last and highest note of our scale, that is, of the active life of Christian charity with which we began.

But as our study opened with humility and went as far as renunciation and self-denial, I am sure it would be rather conceited, and not quite in harmony with our object, if we were now to dwell particularly on our virtues. So I shall take the faults or some of the faults that are opposed to the virtues by which we rise in the scale of religious or Christ-like perfection.

To steadiness is opposed—fickleness, moodiness, inconsistency, irregularity, wanton desire of change, fancy. Did I say *fancy?* Yes.

FA.

This will do — *Fa;* we can remember it by the first syllable. A religious who has *fancies* is a difficult subject to analyze, especially if a woman. I have mentioned fickleness, moodiness, inconsistency, irregularity, or anxiety for change — all of which defects partake of this quality and have their root in fancy. A religious might take a fancy to a child in the school — and thus withdraw her heart from God. She might fancy that her abilities are underrated, or else that the Superior-General has heard about them and only keeps

her *in petto* with a view to have her establish new foundations that would eclipse the glory of all previous undertakings in the order. She might fancy that some Sister has a grudge against her, or an admiration for her; or, indeed, a thousand other things possible to our poor self-conceited nature. But whatever they are, these fancies proceed from an unchecked imagination and an unbalanced judgment. And from this condition spring endless fruitless desires to do and to undo. Such desires are disastrous to interior peace and to exterior order, both of which results make it impossible for charity to grow, not only in the soul of the religious who harbors them but in its neighborhood also.

What is the remedy?

Give no freedom to your imagination, to day-dreams, to hopes of being employed or noticed, to curiosity as to what others think of you. Say: "God leads me: His holy will is sure to bring me where I am needed." Strive after absolute abandonment to Him, after an entire indifference to particular persons, places, and objects, except in so far as they present themselves as undoubted instruments of the Divine Master to whose service we have pledged ourselves without any reserve. Control the truant fancy, and strive by steady steps to attain self-government, the home rule of the heart, which enables the true religious to surrender a perfect will to God.

The steadiness of aim which controls the vagaries of a flighty vanity is main-

tained by fidelity to a recognized duty or purpose. The fault opposed to this is for the most part unfaithfulness in little things. We must not forget that charity suffers from this kind of unfaithfulness very considerably; for the lax and slatternly manner of dealing with persons and things consecrated to God's special service, which characterizes this same unfaithfulness, is apt to scandalize and irritate others, and thus destroys the spirit of order, which spirit is absolutely necessary to peaceful community life. It scatters attention and weakens in general control of self. I have just mentioned this distemper, in passing, as a common characteristic of fanciful and flighty people; and every religious knows that flights of this kind are sure to bring on confusion,

which is not the element by which an order is maintained.

SOL.

But there is another way in which charity suffers at times, and that from what would seem to be a virtue, at least in a religious. I mean a certain solemn manner which, without being pompous, carries with it an air of stiff singularity, a sort of preciseness about little things which seems to apply the rule, like a tape measure, to everything and to everybody whom it meets. This is a fault which calls more for regret than censure, and as a rule those who possess it are punished by being habitually misunderstood in the circle of friends or associates toward whom they really bear the kindliest sentiments.

These religious are exemplary in observing the rule. They couldn't do otherwise; it comes to them by nature. They are always grave and demure and look for correctness, as if they were funeral directors, which they don't mean to be at all. The fact is they have an upright moral backbone, which is their perpetual cross, and which makes them strait-laced and solemn, like official scarecrows in the religious field intended to guard the place against the approach of joyousness. Whilst they don't actually prophesy dismal things, they throw a damper on harmless recreation, and thus seem to put up a severe standard for others.

If we should suffer even slightly from this peculiarity, let us by all means exert ourselves in the way of

improving our looks and put some joyous flexibility in place of the stiffness which has come to us by inheritance.

The gravity that has no smiles is good enough for the anchorites, people who live in deserts, or in cellars, like mushrooms, that need no light. In the convent we need sunshine and geniality. Good humor is a quality that can be cultivated, and, as it is a great power for good, we ought to cultivate it incessantly. Why should not this religious, to whom order and obedience come, as it were, naturally, be pleasant at all times? I have called this note *Sol*, because the *Sol*emnity which I have criticized is the thing to be counteracted; for, though it is not sinful, it nevertheless befits only solitaries of the desert, who save their souls by pure

love of God, having no neighbors to try their virtue or their affections. We, however, are expected to save our souls in company, that is, through charity toward others—the poor, the infirm, the ignorant. Among these may be counted the members of our household, who profess the vow of poverty, and who are supposed to have realized the condition of their dependence and who are engaged in the study of self-knowledge, and self-abasement, which is the science of the saints.

LA.

But the austerity that chills is much less opposed to the genial atmosphere of charity which should reign in a religious house than a certain languishing, sighing, and doleful manner of sensitive

persons, with whom every correction, however delicately administered, opens the flood-gates of the tear-reservoir. *La* is their note. They belong to the *La*mentation choir which, instead of appearing for three days in Holy Week, is kept going all the year round. What such natures need is a little experience of the rough handling, the sharp actualities of the world. Hence it is a wise precaution to let the tender sprout of a graduate, who thinks she has a vocation to Religion, go out into secular life for a while, before admitting her as a postulant to the cloister. "Society life" is indeed a danger, against absorption into which the innocent must be guarded; but it has also its advantages for the young nestling who never got rid of her superfluous tear-supply. A

little application of the sharp burnings of worldly wit and censure is likely to evaporate the precious liquid treasured under the eyes, and to leave behind only the salt of worldly wisdom which, if it finds anything to cry about, does it in secret, and rarely enough when it discovers that nothing good comes of it. For us who are bent on self-reform, the habit of weeping over wounds inflicted upon self-love is entirely contrary to that holy courage which is characterized by serenity, by an habitual peace and joy, marks of a well-balanced mind and will. In short, these rain showers of self-love are opposed to charity.

Si (*Sa*)

The next step toward Christ's charity is (for the religious) the sisterly spirit—

that is to say, the community spirit. Opposed to it is, first of all, *singularity*, which separates us either in act or thought from the common circle, whose individual members were given us by God as companions, to revere, to help, to cherish, and of which circle He Himself proposes to be the constant centre. We hear a good deal about singularity as hurtful to the spirit of community life; and we know exactly what the Rule means when it prohibits this violation of conventual charity. There is, however, one phase of it to which I would call attention here, because it has a way of disguising itself or getting out of reach, and thus doing a good deal of mischief in a quiet way.

The singularity of which I speak is not the habitual article which is consti-

tutional with vain or sentimental people, but rather one that comes spasmodically and which times itself in its ugly moods. It appears after storms, usually after some correction in the chapter-room or upon the refusal on the part of the superior to endorse some pet scheme. In short, it is usually provoked by some of those little humiliations which our own pride brings upon us without anybody else contributing thereto. Such storms, instead of clearing the atmosphere and making the sun come out, are attended, for a considerable time after the thunder and lightning have gone, by dark skies, with a moody, brooding silence. It usually exhibits in the recreation-room, where it shows by way of contrast to the habitual light of joy supposed to pervade conventual

relaxation. And therein lies the singularity of this silent, sullen mood. Women have, if my readers will not be angry with me for saying it, this fatal gift (besides the "dono fatale della bellezza" of which the poet speaks), that they can inflict pain without seeming to say or do anything painful; just as, on the other hand, they possess the power of being magnificently kind without the pretence or show of charity. Their cleverness finds a way of becoming an instrument of torture, inflicting wounds hardly perceived, yet fatal to the health or life of another's heart against whom it is directed. A seemingly casual look or gesture, often without any words, acts like a sting, speedily and delicately instilling the poison which pains and destroys happiness; yet it permits

no one to locate or charge the wanton act against its originator.

This kind of silence loudly proclaims itself, as I have said, in the midst of a happy band by its morose singularity. It seems to say with every breath it draws out: "See, Sisters, don't you realize that I have been crushed; that my spirits are broken?" In this way sympathy is courted from the crowd around without a word; and if perchance there be another discordant note in that room, there arises at once a mutual understanding, and the joy and the harmony of the community are disturbed.

There are many, many varieties of this singular spirit, this silence that speaks volumes of wounded pride, and which violates charity by casting suspi-

cion on the methods, the motives and conduct of superiors who are powerless to defend themselves. Sometimes it is merely an imagined wrong that is being resented in this ungenerous way; a reported word is taken up and thought over until it has supplied enough food for a grievance, when false zeal sets it afire by an air of violated rights. But enough of this unwholesome subject.

Another, though much less hurtful form of silent singularity, is preoccupation with certain individual duties which hinders us from giving ourselves to the community in a spirit of sociableness. It has the advantage of being understood, and does not, like the morose silence of injured self-love, spread an atmosphere of poison of which you cannot reach the exact source, and which

therefore does not allow the party against whom it is directed any fair defence. But whilst it may seem excusable, it is not always harmless, and may injure the spirit of religious charity.

We might indeed be so self-occupied as to deem ourselves justified in neglecting the duties of sisterly attention, even whilst we are present at common recreation. Yet, although everybody understands that there are times and places rendering such isolation legitimate, it is nearly always at the risk of lessening charity that we permit our duties to engross us when we are actually in the circle of others, where everybody is naturally expected to contribute to the common conversation. True charity is considerate, sympathetic, thinks of others first, is disinterested, noble, and

chivalrous. Shall we not cultivate this spirit? Assuredly. Thus we compass the full range of that royal virtue of charity which leads to Christ. It makes of our efforts an ascending scale, the end of which is in Paradise.

The last note, like the first of this scale, is and remains — Do!

ÉTUDES.

We have seen that the perfection of the Religious Life is reached by gradual advance through the exercise of certain virtues which may be compared to the notes of a musical scale in which the last sound represents the highest degree of practical charity. As a musical exercise the scale is merely finger practice. There is no air, no particular melody in it. It only *renders us apt* for the performance of those more pleasing and elaborate pieces which delight the ear and raise the heart. Such pieces are still to be learned.

Looking at a Religious Order living in community from this point of our analogy, the practice of the scale may be compared to the practice of vocal or

mental prayer, or of mortification, or of obedience, or of any other virtue which leads to the habit of perfect charity. It is a dry and monotonous exercise, until we have learned to apply it by a sort of instinct to the ordinary actions of life so as to give edification and enjoyment to others. Then our hearts are no longer constrained to irksome labor; but they make melody within and harmony without, and they answer perfectly to the intentions of our Divine Master, who presides at the organ and renders us active instruments of His holy will.

We must, therefore, learn to play something—something that has a *motif* in it, and that makes people listen to the air, and causes them to repeat it to themselves, or that draws them to chime in with their voices, accompanying the

melody. Indeed, this is one of the principal objects our Great Organist has in view. He wants to bring everybody to listen to and join in the sacred music. If the little ones of Christ, or the poor in the world, or those who by reason of sin have lost the sense of joy, can be made to attend to the beautiful music of our lives, they will easily learn the words of truth which are set to the melody of religious activity; they will forget their sorrows and accept the lesson of resignation; they will begin to long for nobler joys, such as the angelic hymns sweetly announce to all those who seek admittance to Paradise: Glory to God in heaven, and peace to men of good will.

In the matter of music, it must be confessed that for some of us it is far

more difficult to learn than it is for others. There are certain natures gifted with talents, such as a good ear, or a light touch and a retentive memory, for musical pieces. They find it quite easy to play what they once hear or are taught. They need hardly any notes and no study, or very little, because they play by ear. To such players may be compared the religious who practise the virtue of charity in certain directions as if it came to them by nature. They love children; therefore children love them and can be managed by them. Such a natural disposition is nothing less than a vocation to a life of service for poor children, orphans, or foundlings. Others possess an inborn sympathy for the suffering, together with a certain tact and prudence. This fits

them for the service of the sick, and they feel an attraction to enter an Order in which they can spend their lives amid the miseries of a hospital. Others, again, have a natural reverence for the aged, which makes them anxious to serve them, ready to excuse their peculiarities, and willing to take upon themselves humiliations for the alleviation of the aged poor. This means a call to such service as God requires from religious like the Little Sisters of the Poor. But all these whom I have mentioned may be said to catch the divine melody by ear, and they can hardly do otherwise than follow the attraction of their vocation, so that, even if they were obliged to live in the world, they would seek the occupation of nurses or take a hand in organizing charitable

projects for the relief of the poor and the infirm.

Now, to those whose natural ability and attraction lead them toward works of mercy and charity — and that is the favorite tune of our Divine Master — it is needless to say anything by way of particular instruction beyond what has already been said. They might profit by certain exercises, but they do not have to go through the *whole* Practice Book of Christian Perfection.

Apart from the religious who are gifted with an inborn love for works of mercy, and who are therefore like players endowed with a *natural* musical gift, there are others who have a capacity for developing *artistic* talent, and whom our Lord employs or rather selects for certain difficult performances

which require special skill. The tastes and abilities of such religious are to be directed and educated in particular lines. It is to this class that I am addressing myself presently.

A Vocation.

Charity does not require a special vocation; the foundations of it are laid in the heart, and the will builds upon these foundations, whilst the mind merely superintends its proper exercise. But the art and science of *Education* demands certain special studies and special instruction; and those who are called to a religious life, the duties of which imply absolute devotion to the work of education, must apply themselves in a particular way to the "Études."

If you ask me what are "Études," I refer you to a dictionary. "Étude = a study, a lesson in music; a composition having *artistic* value and intended mainly to *exercise the pupil in overcoming some particular technical difficulty*." There you have it all. To produce a brilliant concert-effect we must apply ourselves to the Études. Let us devote some attention to this theme. Our object is to find some *helps in performing the religious task of teaching*. Accordingly we shall give our attention first of all to certain difficulties in the performance of our school-work. These difficulties may be likened to certain musical passages, fugues, and contrapuntal arrangements, which have not the air of easy melody, and must be overcome by careful analysis. They

have to be studied in order that the sacred concert may be a perfect success; for in Heaven nothing will be accepted but what is perfect.

If we have become familiar with these artistic parts and have mastered the Études with care and thoughtfulness, we shall have no difficulty in any other theme, whether it be the *sonatas* and grand *marches*, which by reason of their form and name suggest public performances that make considerable sound, or certain "Commencement" Exercises, of which I should like to say something, if I were not afraid of exasperating some good people. The practice of the Études will also render easy for us the meditations, fantasies, and serenades that elevate the heart in peaceful hours of rest, and which serve

as a preparation for the great symphony in which all who are on the side of God will take part some final day.

Motives and Principles of the "Études."

God is life. Life, as science has demonstrated, is progressive motion. Hence, we might say that life in union with God is true progress. Progressive motion is indeed essential to religion. From this principle we derive the conclusion that a religious must strive to make continual progress in the way which leads to Christ-like charity.

But just as the practice of progressive finger exercises in music is not sufficient to produce results of melodic or harmonious composition, so the pro-

gressive motion of the Religious Life, without a particular motive or design producing harmony, or accompanying some Divine purpose which, like a melody, leads the theme, is insufficient for the practical work of Christ-like charity. This is especially true of the work of education. A religious who practises all the virtues of our scale in a perfect degree is still accomplishing only or mainly his or her own personal sanctification. Progress in holiness sanctifies the individual. It is the gradual and spontaneous rising of the soul, which, casting off, one after another, the impediments of earth, grows lighter and becomes spiritualized. Thus, under the influence of the Divine attraction, it is lifted toward its center, God. Such is the progress of personal

sanctification which suffices for the contemplative.

The religious of our teaching orders, however, profess more than their own sanctification. They are not contemplatives merely, receiving and feeding upon the full light of divine grace, like the fixed star; but they are like the planets, which, whilst shedding the light received, determine at the same time the motion and lightsome progress of others around them. They not only move along the straight, well-determined, and narrow path that leads to salvation, but they make that path clear and accessible to others, thus following the Divine Sun, Christ, who said, not simply "I am the truth and the life," but likewise "I am the way."

Now, the idea of progress implies

that of perfectibility, of betterment, of change, not only in ourselves, but also in those whose motion and life we influence and determine by education. Heat, which is identical with motion, affects the metal in the crucible, reducing it to liquid, and thus rendering it capable of adaptation to the forms which surround it. This change does not lessen the quality or value of the metal, but it enhances it. Thus, whilst religious persons aiming at their own sanctification may remain isolated, unaffected by the changes around them, the members of the active, and, most of all, the teaching orders, aiming at becoming instruments of knowledge, vessels dealing out wisdom unto others, can not remain impervious to the influences around them. By allowing themselves,

within proper bounds, to adopt the form and fashion of things around them, they enhance their own value.

Progress, not Change.

The founders of our religious teaching institutes understood this; yet they could not always foresee the character of the influences which would affect society in the future, and they could not, therefore, have legislated for meeting the educational requisites of the present day in detail. They knew that others would continue their work with the same intelligent zeal which had inspired their own activity; and so they did what every enterprising founder of an industrial establishment intended to serve posterity, does: they marked out the nature of the work, the material to

be fashioned into forms that answered the habits of their generation, the principles which were to guide the conduct of their assistants. But they did not wish the interests of their work to suffer from an absolute adherence to the forms and fashions that were in use in their own day, and time, and place; they did not intend to prevent such changes as would seem necessary to serve the needs of a people whose habits of thought and feeling and whose methods of living might differ from their own, provided these changes were not out of harmony with the spirit of their foundation. Hence, the plans which the founders of our religious teaching Orders devised for the instruction of their own generation in its time and place, although not to be lightly set aside, are yet no

essential part of that religious life which the members of the teaching Orders have assumed, under the Divine guidance, as their means of special sanctification.

In recognizing this fact we merely recognize the action of God in His own creation. Take the vine-fruit which the Heavenly Gardener has planted and ripened on the golden hillsides of sunny Burgundy. The amber creaming liquid distilled from its grape has a rare fragrance and a wondrously health-giving strength. French emigrants, eager to increase the yield of this gift of nature, have taken perfect specimens of the vine to California, where the mountains slope and the white soil shines like the chalky elevations of their own Mont Rachet; and they dealt with their transplanted

sprigs as they would deal with the young growth raised on their own native soil, —sheltering, nourishing, pruning with care; yet the first result was a wine as dry and bitter as vinegar. Then they varied the treatment, added grape-sugar during the fermentation, or by the application of heat interrupted the process which turns the natural sugar of the grape into alcohol, and there came forth a mellow wine promising to rival that of the mother soil. These viticulturists did not change the plant, but they adapted their treatment of it to the new climate and the new conditions of the soil, thus reaching the same results as their trade taught them to look for at home.

We realize, then, that such changes in the art of educating are a necessity

where the conditions of growth, whether social, intellectual, moral, or physical, vary; for in these cases there is no deviation from the original purpose, which was not so much to maintain an unalterable routine as rather to produce a definite result: "By their fruits you shall know them."

Caution.

But whilst a religious educator is not always right in appealing to the traditions of the past as an excuse for losing hold of the opportunities offered in the future, the cry for advance may beguile him to adopt a course which is more disastrous than a total falling back. In showing the necessity of progressive changes in the educational field, I have used the figure of the vine which is

transplanted for the health-giving and exhilarating qualities of its fruit. Yet that same fruit of the vine has wrecked more healthy lives and destroyed more happiness than pestilence or war; for man, in his endeavor to increase the vivifying effects of this beneficent liquid, has induced the convalescent, eager for the joy and strength of life, to drink to excess. The amber liquid, with its tiny pearls rising in the glass, tasted so innocently sweet that he did not perceive how the subtle fumes ascended to his brain and stole away his judgment. It behooves us, therefore, to be measured in accepting every novelty of study or method in pedagogics, or to make it our own at the risk of lessening, by the increase of apparent knowledge, the development

of that sound judgment which lies at the root of true wisdom and of the science of the saints, upon which social as well as personal happiness is unalterably founded.

First Étude.

Altogether our religious teachers, true to the established spirit and constitution of the approved institute to which they belong, possess every means of securing real progress and success if they utilize the sciences and scholastic methods of secular life for the attainment of the end for which God established society. To attain this object the educators have to turn their attention to constant improvements in three directions:

1. As regards the general organi-

zation of a course of instruction, outlining the main programme of studies, fixing with precision the object, scope, and character of each class, and the time justly to be allotted to each branch. And here it is to be noted that a judicious disposition of such branches as may be for the time demanded by popular appreciation, but which are really of little practical use in the after life of the child, will show the true wisdom of the educator. Whatever we teach, we can not afford to dispense with *thoroughness* in education. Now, the secular educational establishment lays, as a rule, less stress upon solidity than upon brilliancy. The eminent Dominican, P. Weiss, characterizes the modern tendency in education in the following terms: Take a

large caldron, such as brewers use,—throw into it zoology, astronomy, and geography; botany, physics, and mineralogy; ethnography, geometry, high calculus, and chemistry; diplomacy, history, and mythology. For each of these specialties one text-book will do,—something in the style of "easy methods." Then make the entire mixture boil vigorously (until it makes sufficient noise). When all the elements are reduced to a uniform paste, of about the consistency of the primitive protoplasm, you must add by way of sweetening some generalities about humanity and advance, then some pet forms of politeness, and just a trifle of religion—it is fashionable, provided it be sufficiently diluted by liberal views, so that people who are of im-

portance in this world may be saved for the next. All you have to do with this mixture is to dish it out; the instant the child puts it to its lips it will become a veritable Solomon.

Now, this is the prevailing condition of things in the educational world to-day. Our curriculum is crowded with special studies, which for the most part aim at pretense of knowledge rather than the information which strengthens solid convictions and thus becomes of value in life. Under such circumstances the heads of our educational establishments find themselves in a dilemma. We do not aim at brilliancy but at solidity in the education we would impart; yet, if we omit from our curriculum the studies which are properly taught in the accredited schools of the land, we

shall be set down as lacking in progress, and in failing, therefore, to educate children for the sphere in which they are actually to move.

If, on the other hand, we accept all the novelties in pedagogy which are forced upon our attention, we shall fail in disciplining the mind, because of the bewildering multiplicity of topics to which the child has to give its attention. What, then, are we to do about it?

We introduce the new sciences; we must have them on our programme, but we give them the subordinate attention which they deserve when weighed in the balance of practical utility. This fact need not imply that our teaching is to be superficial; and we may truthfully answer in the affirmative the query of parents who wish to

know whether we give due attention in our course to the "latest 'ologies." Happily we have no government inspectors who measure our efficiency by their pagan standards.

Second Étude.

The second field in which progress must be noted is that of educational methods. The test of a method is the power it demonstrates for arriving at adequate results. Our method must be useful, that is, it must be capable of imparting to the child that knowledge which, under present conditions, is necessary for attaining its last end in its sojourn through life; it must impart, therefore, the possession of certain social qualifications and an acquaintance with topics which will enable the child to

take its place in the order established by God for mutual help and converse. In order that this twofold object may be accomplished, our method must be attractive. Thus, what is necessary for the last end, and for the social life, which is the way to that end, may be readily taken and absorbed by the faculties of the child without repelling, wearying, or surfeiting its mind. Now, those of us who have lived through several educational processes and observed the changes will realize that methods which were attractive enough twenty years ago, and imparted good knowledge, have somehow lost their interest for the child of to-day. A wooden horse could amuse a lad of seven for days and weeks, and a pasteboard doll, if it fell, would draw affec-

tionate sighs and tears from the little maid of six. To-day the boy wants a real steam engine, and the girl needs a tea-party and cups of real china to make her feel that she is not being imposed upon. Such is the temper of our children, and we have to reckon with that in our methods. The great variety of studies demanded in the modern curriculum is of some help to the teacher in this respect. Variety delights the child, and there is not much danger in admitting a moderate list of popular branches of study into our curriculum. But it would be a vital error to treat them in a manner which would eat into the time devoted to the essential branches of the old system. Take, for example, the subject of mental philosophy, or of meta-

physics, or of political economy, or similar disciplines which are being taught at many of our institutions. In other directions we have physiology, philosophy of history, ethnology, archæology. For some of these we need Catholic text-books; for others we are referred to the least objectionable works written by Protestants or infidels. All these branches, whilst they are popular, are new to teachers of a few years ago, who feel that the men and women up to their time were quite as respectable and cultured and perhaps better than the new man and woman. The books that treat of these sciences cover from 200 to 400 pages. To master them the pupil and teacher spend numerous hours a week. It will be admitted that to get through one of

the text-books with any hope of giving a systematic survey of any science, which has no art corresponding to it in the practical life of a woman, is a lengthy task consuming much time. Instead of this the Catholic teacher might devise a better plan, saving the pupil much labor, and reserving time and energy for studies more essential in forming character. This method consists in summarizing the leading principles of any given text-book; of selecting those chapters which strike the teacher as of practical worth. These may be presented or dictated to the pupils in brief compositions. The index or contents page of a modern text-book nearly always enables us to follow the connection of thought in the development of a given science. This

involves, certainly, more than ordinary labor, at intervals, for the teacher, since she practically makes her own text-books for her classes. I assume, of course, that she herself has mastered the study through some reputable text-book. This process of condensing is not so difficult, provided the teacher have the gift of connecting and subordinating the parts according to their practical importance, and of referring the pupil, if necessary, to more exhaustive works for later study. We must not forget that the real object of education, quite apart from any religious consideration, can never be to give pupils an actual or complete *knowledge* of the things which they need to use in their respective spheres of life; it can only give them an indication of the nature

of such knowledge, of the sources whence it may be derived, and of the use which can be made of it. All else is cramming the mind, is readily forgotten, and really of no value. Hence we have done enough in ethics, for example, if we explain (requiring the pupil to write and answer questions) what is the meaning and province, what are the leading propositions, what are the principles by which we meet objections to the Catholic view of ethics. In other words, we teach results rather than processes. All this may be done within the compass of a good article in any encyclopædia, and enlarged as our time-table and opportunities allow. There are other methods, brief and interesting alike, especially for advanced classes. They rest on the principle of

eliciting inquiry and interest by the suggestion of originality. But with all this, schedules and educational magazines and the experience of ingenious teachers do make us easily familiar.

Third Étude.

Our method must attract and interest the child; and this is done far more effectively by winning the affections of its heart than by any device of an inventive imagination. The reason is this: whatever appeal you make to the capacity of the child in order to interest it, there is no means which will attract all the pupils in an equal degree. Their apprehension, intelligence, taste, and nervous sustaining power differ greatly at all times and under any

circumstances. Hence, whilst we may hold the attention of some, we lose that of others, who do not simply remain passive, as though they had dropped out of the line, but they promptly become disturbing elements which claim the corrective attention of the teacher. Furthermore, this inequality of conduct arouses a sense of comparison in the more capable pupils who feel themselves superior. Now, whilst competition is a kind of necessity by which we elicit activity, which does not injure the simple-minded child, it generates and nourishes a pride which, bad as it is in man, is infinitely more repulsive in woman, on whom it takes a much greater hold in various forms of envy or jealousy.

The better and far safer way is to

gain the individual affection of the child. For where there is a real affection (and a religious teacher can, as a rule, attain this with surety, on conditions of which I shall speak later on), there is always attention, always willingness to obey, eagerness to understand, and anxiety to please. No doubt, we often find it difficult to accomplish this, either because there is in the child a lack of feeling, or a quality of selfishness which renders its heart unresponsive to suggestions of kindness or interest, or else because we ourselves feel a natural repugnance or (what is worse) an indifference toward children of such disposition. If the defect is in the child, be sure it can be conquered; if it be in ourselves, if it be indifference, then it looks very much

as if we were failures in religion. Living as we do, it is absolutely true that, before we can be true teachers, we must be true religious. Now, every religious will realize that there is no child that has not one very lovable quality about it, though it may have no attraction for us. That one quality is the touch of its soul by the Precious Blood. Whatever we may feel or think, whatever experience we may have gone through to make the heart sick with ingratitude of those whom we have striven to benefit or gain over, two facts remain—the value of the soul of that child, and the pledge we have given to prepare it for its heavenly setting by the process of education, which is the wearisome process of cleansing, and filing, and polishing.

There is in our work this consolation, that the harder the substance (that is to say, the intractable soul of the child), the greater is the price we obtain for it when we have polished it to its capable brilliancy. That brilliancy is, as a rule, the result of friction, which draws to the surface the native heat, and causes a consuming of the rugged fibers. We must keep at it, moving ever along the grain.

If as educators we have drawn out this warmth from the child's heart, it works spontaneously in the direction of efforts. It will follow us; it will watch us, instead of having to be watched; its heart having warmed toward us, it will rise above the common level, as does all heat; it will become what the educator is and wishes

it to be. For it is an unalterable law of life, based on psychological and eternal truth, that a man becomes like to the things he loves. This is true *a fortiori* of the child. If, having taught it to love you, you show it that you love virtue, that you love knowledge, it will exert all its innate powers to possess these qualities also, because we covet what we love, and, most of all, that which is distant from our reach. It is part of our very being to long for the filling of the void in our fallen nature, and this fact is the very proof of our immortality. So true is this, that the child becomes transformed even as to its physical expression, and takes on the likeness of the teacher. Have you ever observed a singular family-likeness in religious of the same

order, who, having lived under the discipline and teaching of a common guide, and in the spirit of a common founder, somehow seem to reflect in their very physiognomy the peculiar character of their institute? Such is our nature; and this is the meaning of the Thomistic teaching (*de fide*) that the soul of man is the *forma substantialis* of the body; in other words, that the soul gives form to the whole human being. Let us, then, lay hold of the soul of the child, and we shall get the leading string which controls all its talents, all its capacities, its temper and disposition, nay, its physical perfection and eternal well-being.

We have considered the directions in which progress is desirable for our teachers, pledged first and foremost to

the service of Christ, to whom also we are bound to lead others. These directions regard the curriculum of studies to be pursued and the methods to be adopted, among which is always the first and most effectual—and in the long run the easiest—that which aims at gaining the affection of the child, making it docile and receptive for every kind of knowledge, natural and supernatural, which the teacher is capable of imparting. And this leads to a third and culminating point in the progressive movement of pedagogy, namely, the formation of the perfect teacher. For, after all, everything depends on the direct influence of the one who is to fashion the soul of the child into a perfect likeness of its Creator, whose immediate representa-

tive is the teacher. *Sicut rex ita grex.*

Such are the Études, the special studies to which the religious who is called to teach must give his or her earnest attention.

Principles in Practice.

A knowledge of the theory, of the principles of musical composition, is not sufficient to produce actual harmony of sounds. On the other hand, our practice will be desultory unless we keep before us those fixed principles which underlie our art of making heavenly harmony in the souls of those whom we are to teach. Before speaking of the formation of the perfect teacher, under the head of "Cultivation

of Style," let me resume a few principles from what has been said:

1. In the matter of admitting new branches into the curriculum of studies, our teachers act wisely in accepting such as are commonly approved; but always with the distinction that what is not a direct aid to leading a religious life is to be subordinated to what we, who educate the heart before the mind, hold as essential; that the studies which give *solidity* are always to go before those that give brilliancy.

2. The most efficient *method* is the method which most interests the child in any study that imparts convictions. Opinions are not convictions, even if they are truths.

3. Though science is necessary for the teacher, it does not make the edu-

cator. The secret of educating well lies in a *knowledge* of the human heart, in *patience*, and in the power of *example*.

4. All education which does not teach the child to perfect itself by a *habit of self-control* and personal discipline is a failure.

5. Cleverness, taste for study, habit of industry, may be inherited by a child. The one thing that is not transmitted by inheritance is Christian virtue; it requires an educator.

6. The child becomes like to the teacher whom it most loves.

Cultivation of Style.

Professed religious who are called to teach have their appointment "by divine grace." It is their privilege,

and, if rightly taken hold of, it will be their constant joy to coöperate with God in His great work of accomplishing, of perfecting the designs of creation. The renewal of the world, its conservation in a healthy spirit, means nothing else than a continuous creation through the action of the Divine Spirit. "Emitte Spiritum Tuum et creabuntur, et renovabis faciem terrae." This is eminently true of education, which is the training unto perfection of the highest type of creation—man.

To coöperate rightly, therefore, with God in this work of teaching requires special qualifications. These are, indeed, guaranteed to the members of the teaching orders—thanks to God's wondrous goodness—in the fact that

He has called them to this task. Religious teachers may not always be conscious of the possession or operation of such qualities, because these were given them in the manner of a germ or seed, to be developed and cultivated in the soil of a good and faithful heart; and, as it is often difficult to tell what sort of fruit a small seed may bring forth, so a teacher may have no clear conception of what he or she can do, or rather what God may do in using them as instruments of education. Nor is it necessary. Does the lily grow less fair because it is unconscious of its growth? In truth, it is very much better for all of us that we should not trouble ourselves about our talents in the way of rating them. What we have to do is to use them, and their use begins by

keeping them, like fruitful seed, under ground for awhile (humility), and to gather in this condition a certain amount of heat (fervor), so that the seed may break (mortification); and then the little germ, whatever its ultimate productiveness, will of itself struggle through the hard crust of the earth to the light. And if after that it is kept under proper shelter, within the rays of the Divine Sun which warms it, and drinks in the waters of divine grace which bedew it, and yields to the care of the gardener appointed by God, to tie and to steady it, giving it a rule lest it grow crooked, and to prune it, sometimes even unto tears, lest it spread itself unduly—then that sprout of talent will bring flowers, and in its season fruits, with which we may safely

feed the little ones whom God intrusts to us for education.

Safely feed the little ones! We may; and yet, in our very good-heartedness (which is sometimes a weakness), we may overfeed them, or feed them at the wrong time, or feed them with a fruit too ripe or raw, or feed them in a manner too hasty, or in morsels too big for the little throats. In short, our feeding, however good the fruit of our gifts of mind, instead of preserving life, may produce illness, pain, mental dyspepsia, cholera, choking, death of mind and heart; and we who might have prevented it will be answerable for the results.

It is on this point, in the long line of a teacher's qualifications, that I will ask my readers chiefly to dwell, after

briefly stating, for the sake of logical coherence, what every one knows to be the principal requisites, natural, intellectual, and moral, of all those who are called to the very important office of educating the young.

Expression.

I. (1) Among what are termed natural or physical qualifications, health is obviously counted, inasmuch as it implies the possession of habits of life which exclude a warping of the judgment and temper of the teacher (*mens sana in corpore sano*), or the arousing of certain repugnances and prejudices which offend the sensibilities of the pupil. However, we know that defects of the body can often be compensated

for by extraordinary gifts of soul. Among the most efficient educators have been those who were habitually under the stress of physical suffering.

(2) Next to health come (in the same natural order) an instinct of propriety, (3) a sense of order, (4) simplicity of manner. The last two are an ordinary result of the spirit of holy poverty and an abiding consciousness of the presence of God. I say of *holy* poverty, because that is quite compatible with the neatness and cleanliness which betoken a regard for our surroundings. "We are to form the pupils to habits of simplicity, order, economy, and a taste for the useful," writes the Venerable Madame Barat, one of the most enlightened educators of our time, and of these things we

must give the example. Such are the external qualifications.

There are likewise *internal* gifts of the natural order requisite for the successful work of education:

(*a*) Ordinary insight or penetration into human nature, and the tact which accompanies that gift;

(*b*) the ability to communicate our thoughts;

(*c*) sufficient inventive power (imagination) to present knowledge in an interesting form, and elicit attention;

(*d*) the natural power of enforcing discipline;

(*e*) a pleasant manner.

Somehow sanctity supplies all these; but in proportion as sanctity is lacking, they must be supplied from the natural order.

II. In the intellectual order the teacher requires:

(1) Knowledge of the branches or topics to be taught, and of methods, particularly in certain special branches. The present training colleges lay considerable stress on this, and teach, under the head of "theory and practice of education:" psychology, logic, ethics, the art of teaching, the history of education, methods for special topics, school hygiene, school problems, criticism, elocution.[1] I mention these merely under the head of knowledge because of the popular demand, and because similar courses have been adopted by some of the teaching orders in England, notably in the Normal Training School

[1] Cambridge Course, 1899.

of the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus.

(2) The habit (natural or through training by mathematics, logic, etc.) of consecutive and logical thinking. This secures the method which develops by means of synthesis and analysis.

III. A third category of qualifications belongs to the moral order. For religious teachers they may be summed up in the faithful observance of the spirit and letter of the Rule of their institute.

This qualification is decidedly of the highest importance, since it supplies both knowledge and method, because—

(1) nearness to God opens all the sources of wisdom and knowledge;[1]

(2) because nearness to God puts us

[1] St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure, St. Philip Benitius, Suarez, and other intellectual giants have called the crucifix their book; and we know what that book taught them even of human learning.

in the right attitude toward the child; it gives us supernatural love, which inspires the best method for attracting and teaching it.

Tempo.

What is called *tempo* in music is an indication of the relative rapidity of movement or rhythm with which a piece or passage is to be played. Thus *lento* is slow, *allegro* fast, *forte* strong, *piano* soft. In the work of education, religious education such as we are considering, nothing can be done successfully unless we observe the proper *tempo*. The manner in which we strike a note is apt to bring out the character of the piece. The touch must always be bold, that is to say, definite; yet always just, that is, not too strong or too subdued.

I have already outlined the qualifications which are demanded in the Christian educator, of whom the true religious, apart from the well-informed parent, is the best type. If I were to put the whole matter in a simpler mould, following an eminent modern educator, Père Lecuyer, I would say that our efforts should lay stress on the perfecting of certain natural virtues, which will give to our work of education the proper movement or *tempo*, and render it infinitely superior to any training that the best efforts of pedagogical science and art can attain in all the different orders of study, intellectual or social. The two virtues which represent, so to speak, the prevailing *tempo* of our work as educators are courage and justice. They are the

two main hinges on which swings the gate of the religious educator's efficiency, the gate which opens the way for the pupil to that sphere of the child's future usefulness which the education in the schools over which religious preside was intended to secure.

If we desire confirmation of this thought, we shall find it in the teaching of the Angel of the Schools, which presents a singular harmony with the educational maxims to be gleaned in general from the lives of the founders of the orders that have made the training of the young their special object.

Forte.

Courage (*fortitudo*), one of the essential requisites in the character of the

Christian educator, is, according to the Angelic Doctor, a virtue which restrains man within the bounds of right reason, whilst urging him to overcome the obstacles opposed to reason or to its legitimate use.[1]

There are two ways in which this virtue manifests itself:

1. In sustaining with equanimity and good-will the hardships imposed upon us by our condition of life.

2. In facing deliberately *new* conditions which involve hardships and dangers.

The habit of perseverance is the result and perfection of courage.[2]

[1] *Summa* 2a 2ae, qu. 123, art. 1.—Cf. *Le Prêtre Educateur*, Lecuyer, pp. 4 ff.

[2] *Cf.* 1 Cor. 13: 7, where St. Paul shows the twofold manifestation of courage to be a characteristic of the fundamental virtue of charity—"charitas omnia suffert"—*πάντα στέγει*, that is, bears in silence; and "omnia sustinet"—*πάντα ὑπομένει*, that is, sustains, supports.

It is the virtue of fortitude which strikes us so predominantly in the lives of those saintly and generous pioneers who came to the New World to teach the rudiments of Christian faith and civilization to the natives and to the neglected children of the early rude settlers. These noble religious never spoke of success, yet it is to their seemingly slow progress that we owe the most valuable results of subsequent periods in our history of Christian education. The saintly Madame Duchesne used to say: "Personally I have never succeeded, but God gives me grace to rejoice in the success of others." Yet it was to her that Madame Barat felt impelled to write (February 16, 1852): "Oh, if we had many souls as zealous and as detached

as those who have invaded your part of the world, *foundations would be easy.* Pray, then, dear and good Mother, urgently and fervently that our Divine Master may consider the *needs of the souls* we ought to save. He will grant the prayers of my dear old daughter who has so well understood the value of souls, and who *never stopped* at any obstacle when Jesus called upon her to help them."[1]

But this virtue of courage or fortitude, which we are to cultivate in ourselves as Christian educators, must likewise be drawn forth and developed in the child. I say *drawn forth and developed*, because its germ resides in the soul of the child. There is in every human being a physical and moral

[1] *Life*, Vol. II, p. 272.

force which, though latent in early years, is capable of being cultivated so as to produce this Christian courage which is the secret of self-denial, of charity, of zeal, even unto martyrdom, for the salvation of souls. You will find this germ-virtue in the child's soul manifesting itself in three centers of action—intellect, heart, and will.

In every child this moral force dominates in one or other of these faculties, and the secret of our gaining control of the child consists in finding the dominant faculty and developing and utilizing it.

I have said in a previous chapter that the teacher must love the child and gain its affection in order to succeed in training it properly. But the difficulty is often how to draw out its

affection; for we must not forget that love here spoken of is not a sentiment, not an attachment which is created by favors, caresses, or flattery. No; there are, it is true, children whom we thus bring to follow us by simply appealing to their affectionate disposition; but there are others in whom intelligence predominates over affection; and others in whom the will (self-will) predominates over both.

À Piacere.

To the child that has heart, whose sympathies are strong and quickly rise to the surface, the educator need give comparatively little attention. You can let it move as it pleases (*à piacere*). Such a child will follow its teacher spontaneously, and it will do whatever

is prescribed or even suggested by a superior who can command respect by his or her personal conduct as a religious. Indeed, it is generally to the advantage of such a child to be rarely noticed by the teacher, except in so far as the common discipline or exceptional sensitiveness, showing the need of occasional encouragement, may demand. What the child of heart needs most is the fostering of independence of character; and with this end in view it must become accustomed to stand alone; thus it is brought, gradually, to develop the element of courage latent in its soul. The young tree shaken by the rude winds and stripped of its leaves may look quite forlorn at times and provoke the pity of the gardener; but the gardener, too, has an occasion

here for the exercise of courage, by withholding the expression of sympathy, mindful only of the fact that the tree much shaken by the winds lays a stronger hold on the soil, provided the winds are not without intermission, and do not come always from the same quarter. The natural craving for the æsthetic, the poetic, and sentimental, which manifests itself in particular friendships, in letter-writing, and even in certain devotions, is to be curbed in all children of exceptionally big-hearted disposition, as a danger which saps that portion of the material in the soul from which character is to be built for their future safeguard through life. Even when it happens that, in the endeavor to repress this noxious tendency, we seem to wound the sensitiveness of

the child, so that it droops in apparent helplessness, let us remember the nature of the southern *mimosa*. The little sensitive plant shrinks and collapses at the touch of the hand as though withered and broken forever; yet give it a little time and sunshine, and it rises gradually, showing no traces of its former weakness. Hence it is that the wisest instructors, especially in the case of girls, warn the teacher against an excessive cultivation of sentiment or attachment, at the expense of solid principles. However, though the proverb, *Trop de sucre dans la jeunesse, mauvaises dents dans la vieillesse*, applies here, as well as in the physical training of children, it ought to be remembered that whilst children of large sympathies are quite common

in some, especially southern, countries, we have not so many in America; and they are becoming fewer day by day amid the materialistic tendency of modern life, which is calculated to dry up the sentimental element and to turn it into self-love of some other kind.

Crescendo.

A second class of children referred to are those in whom the desire to know and the capacity to understand predominate over the qualities of the heart or the will. Such children must be reached through their minds. Although the teacher can fully control the child only by the attraction of the heart, yet it is necessary first to find and to open the way to the heart. In the predominantly intelligent child this

is done by making it understand its deficiency. Seeing and reflecting to some extent upon its want, there arises in the young soul a longing for that which it lacks, to fill the void recognized in its nature. This longing awakens the operation of the heart, and gives the educator an opportunity to present an attraction by which the child can be led forward and drawn upward.

It would, therefore, be an error to appeal *directly* to the sentiment of affection in a child of this disposition, before we have made it understand the quality of its weakness and the value of that which it lacks. This understanding on the part of the young is mostly brought about by a judicious measure of humiliations in opposition

to the things on which the child naturally prides itself. But such humiliations must *not be imposed;* they must be made to meet the child spontaneously, must come upon it gradually (*crescendo*) in the course of its tasks; and the ingenious teacher will readily find means to let the young talent try its strength upon problems just beyond its reach, looking quietly on, as if to say: After all, you are not so smart, my child, as one might expect. Thus the child is made to see in itself the cause of its humiliation, instead of inwardly resenting it as an act which the teacher inflicts upon it as a penalty for, or a safeguard against, pride.

But here, too, nothing is so much to be recommended as *slow* proceeding, waiting and watching until the child is

ready to profit by the operation of our method. "If you make fire with green wood, you will get more smoke than heat."

Staccato.

The *staccato* movement in music is produced by short pauses, which *separate* or detach the successive sounds of a melody or rhythmic passage. It serves to rivet attention upon the individual notes, giving them a certain distinct emphasis. There is a similar manner of impressing upon the child's mind the idea of order and submission, by separating the personal feelings of fear or regard which the pupil conceives for the *teacher* from the regard which is due to the *law* of the school. We all know the child in whom the will-

power predominates over affections or personal regard for superiors. It must be ruled and corrected by law, by timely command, by regular application to work. Yet, let me say at once that this method must not in any way be understood to weaken the principle that "a good teacher rules by influence rather than by force and violence." The habit of constantly impressing and enforcing orders by the use of reproving words is a sure way to *fail in obtaining respect for either the law or the teacher;* and oft-repeated correction of this kind seriously injures the child's disposition. Let the teacher who finds that he or she has to control such children watch their propensities and ebullitions of self-will for some time before appearing to notice and there-

fore to punish them, unless there is question of gross faults which force themselves on our attention. Then, having seen what needs correction, let the announcement be made, as coming from a superior authority, of certain rules of conduct to be observed in the class under proportionate penalty. These rules should, it must be observed, be *but few*, and such as can readily be observed under ordinary circumstances. If they be sufficiently definite to cover the more common and disturbing breaches of discipline, it will give the teacher an excuse to ignore lesser faults, and to use discretion at times toward indulgence, until the general improved tone of discipline in the class allows a further refining. *There is harm in making rules which*, the

teacher foresees, or ought to foresee, *will not* or cannot *be observed.* Assuming that a good, well-considered set of rules is made, the children will, of course, at once test their strength by violating them. The teacher may show sympathy for the delinquents; but the inexorable law with its penalty remains and is to blame for all the poutings and tears that follow. Gradually the child finds that it has to fear only the unyielding law, and not the teacher. Indeed the latter should always sympathize with the young delinquents, whilst still urging them to obedience. Let the child find out that avoidance of the painful consequences of violating the rules is possible only if it observes the rules. It will not blame the teacher but the rule, which is un-

feeling and unchangeable, or ought to be regarded so. Thus the same force which leads the child to obedience leads it also to esteem for the teacher, and the element of courage is developed through the will, which turns in the direction of order and docility.

There is *one exception* to this method of correction in which the educator maintains a constantly pleasant manner whilst appealing to the inexorable demand of the law of order. This exception is the case of any open violation of the reverence due to God, or of holy things which are understood to involve directly His honor. *A teacher who can make upon the child the impression that he or she condones everything except offenses against God*, at once elevates the child to a higher plane

of view, and secures absolute authority over the pupil. In all matters causing faults against order, propriety, application to scholastic tasks, etc., the child encounters a more or less definitely foreseen penalty inflicted by the existing rules, which process gradually forces upon the young mind the recognition of the external order of things, and instinctively develops convictions regarding the intrinsic value of law. In these cases the teacher has hardly to make any words. But it is different when there is question of the honor due to God, and of sin; then it is well that the child should meet the well-governed but evident indignation of the teacher. For in doing so it will recognize in the teacher the true and consistent representative of God, a

sentiment which elevates the dignity of the teacher, and supplies those forces for governing the child that may otherwise be lacking, either by reason of the absence of certain personal qualities in the superior or by reason of circumstances in which it is particularly difficult to control the child.

Yet, whatever necessity there may be for applying correction, whether in matters of mere deportment and application or in the more serious cases of sin, the double rule of moderation and of seeking if possible a permanent remedy which goes to the core of the evil, holds good throughout the educational process. Constantly rehearsed correction of faults is never, on the whole, successful. Take a shrub in your garden, some root-branch of

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which bends across the path. Every time you pass by you beat it aside or you lift it up; but it comes down each time, and tires and irritates you in the constant effort to avoid its straggling annoyance. Is there no other way? Yes; take a string, tie it around the bush to uphold the froward branch; shortly the cells in the lower part of the stem contract and accommodate themselves to the forced position, and by degrees growing stronger they will hold the branch in place, so that, when the string is removed, the shrub is orderly by its own developed strength. Of course you must measure your string and note the quality; not bind too tight, lest the branch break; not use a string too weak, lest it snap and the relaxed branch hurt some passer-by.

MODERATO.

We have seen that the quality of courage, essential in a good teacher, is developed in the pupil by bringing under control the heart, the mind, and the will,—the operation of the threefold center of action. To do this effectually it is necessary not only that the teacher ascertain the disposition or peculiar character of the child, but also that she should gauge the limits of its capacity in the threefold direction before indicated. This demands in the teacher the virtue of justice or moderation, so as to form a proper estimate of what the child can do, and also to act out the sentiments which that estimate inspires. Fortitude or courage, when not balanced by justice, becomes a danger and a temptation, inasmuch as

it yields to impulses of zeal, of discouragement after failure, of haphazard ventures and foolhardy undertakings, which destroy the previous efforts of better-minded educators.

Justice, as defined by the scholastics, is the consistent or sustained determination to render to every one his proper rights. *Every one*—that is to say, first to God; then to those who directly represent His claims in the Church; next to those who represent the civil and social order; and finally, to our fellow-men, the images of God.

It is important that we recognize the fact that, in the educational process, justice as a supernatural virtue is for the most part to be built upon justice as a natural virtue. And this gives value to the study of the *classics*. The

pupil learns to recognize that there is such a thing as natural virtue, and to look for it, and respect it in those who are not of the household of the faith. Furthermore, it will escape that insidious view so dangerous in practice, though defensible in theory, namely, that because faith furnishes an antidote to the malice of sin, therefore Catholics are excusable for neglecting the external virtues of which non-Catholics who are, often falsely, supposed to polish only the outside of the platter, are as a rule more careful. The child will learn that truthfulness, charity, purity, are virtues which may be cultivated by those who are not so fortunate as to be in the fold of Christ, and that these virtues dispose them for the grace of faith; and the fact that these gifts are

infinitely ennobled by Baptism does not establish a claim of superior merit, but only one of deeper gratitude, together with the graver duty of guarding the treasure with more fidelity. On the other hand, the child will also be made aware of the fact that the passions are scars and weaknesses which result from original sin, and that religious training and the grace of faith do not so much eradicate the passions as rather teach us how to subdue them.

Justice likewise requires that the teacher keep the pupil alive to a proper estimate of the scientific studies for which the young mind may feel an attraction, or possess special aptitude. The sciences are disciplines. They aid us in the discovery of truth; but it must not be forgotten that they always

rest upon fallible senses and fallible reason. They cannot by their demonstrative power supersede the facts of revelation, for the truth of which God's testimony vouches, even when we do not understand them. Pious legends are not, of course, facts of revelation; though it must be noted that the temper of mind which easily rejects or treats with disrespect the reputed manifestations in the supernatural order which command the respect of good and intelligent persons of any age or country is not a healthy one. Nevertheless, it is a singular fact, due probably to the proneness toward wrong ingrafted in human nature by original sin, that the mind will accept as demonstrated any plausible scientific hypothesis, whilst it rejects divine

truths, which rest upon much superior motives of credibility. This tendency of the naturally scientific mind toward skepticism needs to be guarded against and counteracted in early life, when the rudiments of the sciences are being taught; and it is done by emphasizing the difference between supernatural and natural causes and effects.

The principle of justice must likewise be steadily kept sight of in cases where the teacher is bound to punish the pupil. The minister of penalty must ever preserve the dignity and impartiality of an instrument of the Eternal Lawgiver. Thus the exercise of this virtue forestalls all morbid exaggeration, all manifestation of caprice, of weakness in temperament, or of preferences based on individual likes and dislikes.

It may be asked: How can a teacher help having natural likes or dislikes for children of different dispositions? The answer is that, whilst it is impossible to divest one's self of the natural impression which attractive qualities in the child or their contraries inspire, we are not forced to manifest or act upon such impressions; nay, we are bound, in justice to our responsibility as educators, to counteract the dislikes we may feel toward a child, and even more the natural attraction, especially when it is based mainly upon the impression of the senses. The teacher must keep an eye on the useful rather than the beautiful qualities of the child's nature. We may not like iodine in some forms, exhibiting an ugly, grayish color and a pungent, repulsive odor; but we know

its salutary uses as a medicine, and prefer it so, rather than in the form of the brilliant and beautiful purple vapors which it assumes when heated in a retort. The child's unattractive qualities are the ones that the educator must work upon; they are the steps toward its reform and ultimate salvation. In time we may be able to spiritualize these homely forms, when they will rise and take on the brilliant beauty of which they are capable under the influence of supernatural fervor. Thus acting from principle and not upon feelings, the teacher personally cultivates the virtues of disinterestedness, self-denial, and wisdom, which supply to the soul everything needful for the perfect accomplishment of a teacher's important work; for wisdom,

says the sacred writer,[1] leads those that are just through the right ways, and shows them the Kingdom of God, and gives them the knowledge of the holy things, and makes them honorable in their labors, and completes all their works for them: "Justum deduxit Dominus per vias rectas, et ostendit illi regnum Dei, et dedit illi scientiam sanctorum, et honestavit illum in laboribus, et complevit labores illius."

There can indeed be no reason for discouragement in the seemingly toilsome work of the religious teacher, if the rule of justice, which is the rule of the Religious Life, be kept before the mind. The child will pattern itself after the living model before it, and will reflect the spirit and the action of

[1] Wisdom 10: 10.

the teacher. To be successful educators we have to strive to express in our conduct what we would teach to the child: "He that shall *do* and teach, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven"—"Qui autem *fecerit et docuerit*, hic magnus vocabitur."[1] That demands, as we have seen, courage regulated by justice; but it also means assured victory in the domain of true knowledge, true wisdom, which is the greatest power on earth: "Et certamen forte dedit illi ut vinceret, et sciret quoniam omnium potentior est sapientia."[2] In other words, if the vocation of the religious teacher is a call to labor and self-denial, it is also a call to the noblest victory; for He that bade us follow Him in this work, "gave a

[1] Matt. 5: 19. [2] Wisdom 10: 12.

strong conflict" that we "might overcome, and know that wisdom is mightier than all." And if our confidence were nevertheless to fail us in the midst of the struggle, we need but remember that our teacher's chair is the footstool before the "Seat of Wisdom," our Blessed Lady, whom the language of the Church identifies with the Wisdom of Holy Writ. "Venite, filii," she whispers—"Come, children, listen to me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord"—"Audite me: timorem Domini docebo vos."[1]

An Antiphon.

Mary indeed is the model of the religious educator, and the qualities set

[1] Ps. 33.

forth as requisite in the latter are beautifully portrayed in the antiphon with which the Church intones the canticle of the *Magnificat* on our Lady's feast: "Virgo prudentissima, quo progrederis? quasi aurora valde rutilans. Tota formosa et suavis es, pulchra ut luna, electa ut sol—(terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata)."

With the inspired seer we ask the Virgin Mother of Christ what, in her most perfect foresight (*prudentissima*), she points out as the characteristics of true progress (*quo progrederis*)? And the answer is: It is a progress that enlightens by the gradual and temperate development of the affections, even as the blush of the rising sun sends forth its light and heat (*aurora valde*

rutilans) with a real, yet measured intensity. *Tota formosa*, that is, well formed, well instructed in every part. *Suavis*—always pleasant. *Pulchra ut luna*—fair by reason of the Divine Sun, which reflects His light in the teacher, moved by the forces of a supernatural love. *Electa ut sol*—the chosen, the elect of Christ, and like to Him in the beautiful spirit of charity which dispenses light and warmth and fostering care to the young growth that rises toward the heavens. Nor is this all. *Terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata* marks the religious as a teacher belonging to that noble band which like a well-ordered army in battle-array fights for truth and virtue, an army which, by its order, inspires that holy

fear and reverence which is the beginning of wisdom, a wisdom on which depend all our successes in the sacred cause of Christian education.

THE END.

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